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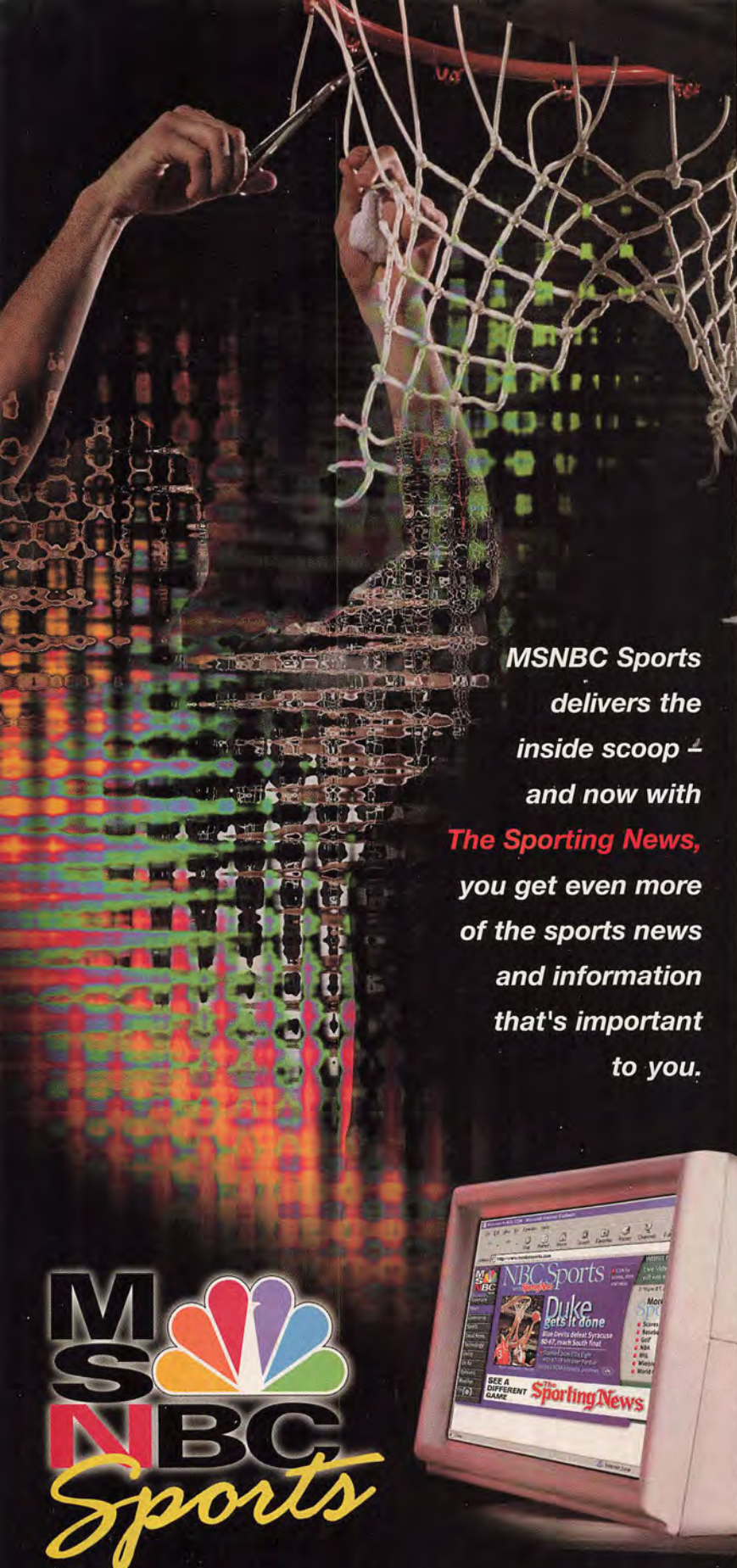
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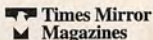
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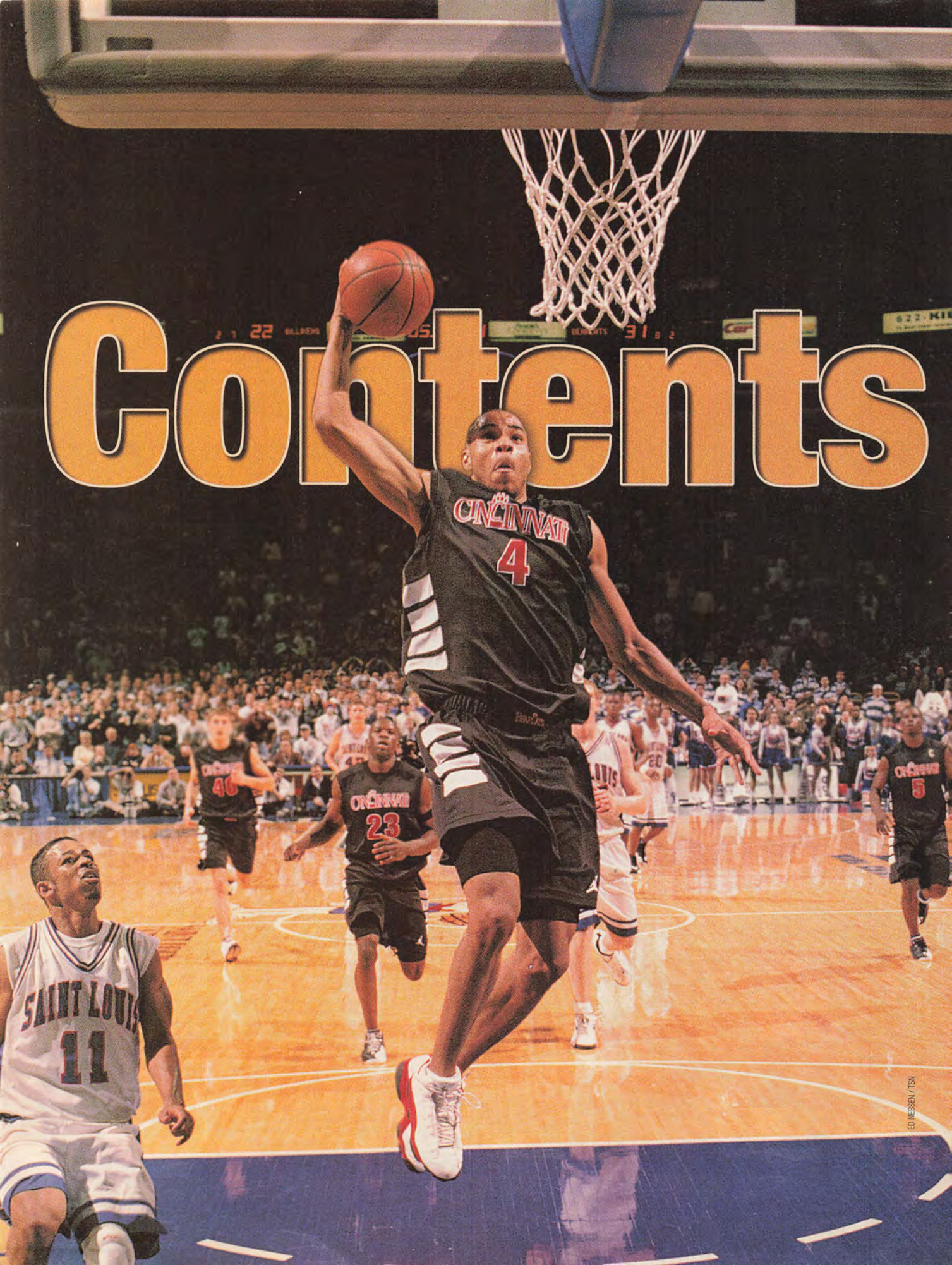
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Contents



Features

Dave Kindred	4	Division II / III report	135
Scouting the Nation	6	Women's preview	136
TOP 25	13	Recruiting report	146
The other 283	18	Our look at the nation's best young talent.	
All-American rankings	20	Junior college report	150
Mateen Cleaves is our preseason player of the year.		Division I schedules	152
Unit rankings	24	General Information	164

Conference Previews

America East	116	Mid-Eastern Athletic	131
Atlantic Coast	36	Midwestern Collegiate	108
Atlantic 10	52	Missouri Valley	99
Big East	82	Northeast	126
Big Sky	124	Ohio Valley	118
Big South	132	Pacific-10	27
Big Ten	60	Patriot League	133
Big 12	74	Southeastern	44
Big West	114	Southern	120
Colonial Athletic Assoc.	112	Southland	130
Conference USA	67	Southwestern Athletic	129
Ivy League	128	Sun Belt	122
Metro Atlantic Athletic	110	Trans America Athletic	127
Mid-American	104	West Coast	106
Mid-Continent	125	Western Athletic	90

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Once upon a grand, glorious and comic time, a Li'l Abner sort of handsome young man named Wendell Ladner came out of the Mississippi piney woods to play professional basketball for the Kentucky Colonels of the dear, departed ABA. Of Ladner lore there is much, including the night he dived for a loose ball, slid along the court to an ungainly stop, found himself at a favorite spot (near the feet of the Colonels' cheerleaders), and looked up to ask one, "Is mah hair mess upped?"

But we're here in the college basketball yearbook to speak of the 3-point shot, any mention of which recalls the night Wendell bent down in the huddle to listen intently as Colonels coach Babe McCarthy instructed his gallant warriors to work the ball inside, to get a good shot, to do nothing foolish because this was a critical possession. Barely had Babe returned to his coaching seat before the red, white and blue basketball found its way to Wendell's itchy-trigger-finger hands and from 35 feet was sent on a suborbital flight toward the rim, a 3-point shot taken from the far right out-of-bounds stripe, a 3-point prayer so awesomely bodacious that for God to answer it would undermine His standards of justice, a 3-point misguided missile that prompted McCarthy's face to fill with such a quantity of blood that one feared for the integrity of the poor coach's eyeballs.

"Wen-dellllllll!" an exasperated Babe yelled.

So it came to pass that the coach asked Wendell Ladner why he ignored all common sense and tried precisely the no-hope shot that would get the Colonels beaten.

Wendell explained his thinking. "Babe, I was open," he said.

Which brings us to what I see as the trouble with the 3-point shot in college basketball today: Every player thinks he's open all the time. What's worse, it's true; players are undefended. And even worse than that, they make many of the shots. All this just encourages more of the nonsense that has caused a certain rot to set in at the foundation of the college game.

Certainly, no one set out to despoil college basketball when the 3-point shot was introduced in 1986. The intent was noble. The shot would open up the interior by rewarding teams for moving the ball outside. It would be an important weapon for smaller players. Though never saying it out loud, NCAA rule-makers also believed the 3-pointer would add entertainment value for television; therefore, more money.

Nothing wrong with those ambitions and they are supported by positive results, beginning in the long-gone American Basketball League created by Abe Saperstein, famous as owner of the Harlem Globetrotters.

Ironically, one of the game's first great giants, 6-10 George Mikan of DePaul and the Minneapolis Lakers, gave the 3-point shot the exposure that has made it a fixture in basketball today. As the ABA's first commissioner, Mikan insisted so strongly on two things that his friends feared he would quit if the league didn't go along. The nearsighted Mikan wanted a ball he could see even from the balcony of arenas. He thought it out this way: He didn't like the NBA's "dirty brown ball"; his league was the American Basketball Association, and America's colors are red, white and blue. "It was that simple," he told author Terry Pluto in the book *Loose Balls*, a history of the ABA.

Mikan also wanted the 3-point shot. "We called it the home run," he said, "because the 3-pointer was exactly that. It brought the fans out of their seats."

(To digress from this digression, please stand for a moment of silence in memory of the red, white and blue ball. When the NBA sucked life out of the ABA in a war to preserve its monopoly, the older, richer league took in a few ABA teams but made a mistake by leaving behind the blessed ball. Alex Hannum, an NBA veteran who wound up coaching in the ABA, once said, "That ball belongs on the nose of a seal." But even a hardcore traditionalist like Hannum came to understand the appeal of the ball's rainbow flight. "It was a good ball to teach shooting because it made it easy to see the rotation," he said.)

The NBA adopted the 3-point shot in 1979, though one owner told Pluto, "When the leagues merged (in '76), the NBA moguls didn't want the 3-point shot. Red Auerbach hated it and said the Celtics would

never go along with it. ... Of course, a few years later Red drafted Larry Bird and suddenly he was all for it."

From mid-rim, the ABA's 3-point shot was a 22-footer from the corners and 23-9 above the key. Those are the NBA distances today.

As for college 3-pointers, we're dealing with the Law of Unintended Consequences. Yes, the 3-pointer opens up the floor, gives the little player a weapon and sells the game to fans. The unintended consequence is that the college game today too often devolves into farce. The NCAA 3-point distance is 19-9 inches to the front rim. That's way too close. The late Jim Valvano, though always in favor of entertainment, said, "I don't want to say it's too close, but my grandfather can make that shot."

If a shot is to be rewarded with an extra point, it ought to be more difficult than your ordinary field goal. Right now, it's just another jump shot. And at 19-9, it's by no means limited to the smaller players for whom it was designed. In the first half of a game last season, eight Duke players made 3-pointers. Against NC State, Duke went 15-of-23 from 3-point range, prompting Wolfpack coach Herb Sendek to say, "If you put them in an empty gym with nobody on them, they couldn't shoot any better than that."

Nor is the 3-point shot a reward for an offense well-run. It is a fall-back strategy; shooters retreat behind the line and wait for someone to throw the ball out to them.

Most damning, the shot is so easy it eats away at the very idea of an offensive system. No longer is it necessary to master the fundamentals of the game. Ballhandler penetration, interior passing, screening, faking and movement without the ball have become lost crafts. Stymied by good defense at 15 feet? Just reverse the ball to the open man on the outside, and let him put it up from 19-10.

Seduced by the ease and pleasure of the 3-pointer, many players and coaches choose to leave the craft's hard work to folks so foolish as to sweat all day for two points when, by just standing there, it's possible to get three in a second.

An image comes to mind, this from

When the 3

the Indiana Jones movie in which the hero is confronted by a villain who suggests impending doom by slashing the air with a pair of long knives—whereupon the hero solves the problem by staying out of reach, pulling a pistol and shooting him dead.

So it goes in college basketball, where the 3-pointer is everyone's pistol.

Many are villains in this piece. But let's start with one of the best coaches alive, Rick Pitino. Running a clinic, he once stopped a 3-on-3 fast break when the middle man put up a 17-foot jumper. "That is the worst shot in basketball!" Pitino exclaimed. By his measure, the shot was neither fish nor fowl—another step and the ballhandler was on his way to a layup, one less step and the shot was a 3-pointer.

The year the 3-pointer became a permanent rule, Pitino's unheralded Providence Friars rode the shot all the way to the Final Four. "Providence came in shooting '3's against a really good Alabama team and absolutely befuddled them," said Billy Reed, a Louisville sportswriter who witnessed the Friars' 103-82 dissection of the Crimson Tide in a third-round East Region game. Later, Reed watched Pitino bring his 3-point magic to Kentucky, where he often befuddled Louisville and coach Denny Crum.

"In those first years against Pitino, Crum refused to adapt to the 3-point shot and got criticized for it," Reed said. "His teams couldn't shoot the '3' and couldn't defend against it."

Pitino said he brought the 3-point shot to scandal-tainted Kentucky to cover a lack of talent. "We needed a gimmick," he said, "and the 3-point offense was just what the doctor ordered." In a 116-113 overtime loss to Southwestern Louisiana in his first season, Pitino's Kentuckians put up 53 3-pointers. In a 121-110 loss to North Carolina in their next



Dave Kindred



ILLUSTRATION BY KEITH SEIDEL

DAVE KINDRED

is practically free

Something's wrong
with a shot that is so
easy our grandfathers
could make it

game, the Wildcats made 21 3-pointers. By season's end, Kentucky had made 281 of a record 810 3-point attempts.

Wait a second. Put a pencil to that and we come up with 843 points on 35 percent shooting. To score that much on two-pointers, Kentucky would have needed to make 422 shots—and shoot 52 percent. So if 35 percent of threes is the equivalent of 52 percent of twos, it makes great sense to fill the air from 3-point land.

It also makes for bad basketball. I've seen too many 3-on-1 fast breaks with no one filling the lanes because the man with the ball is going to pull up for a 3-pointer from the top of the key. I've seen too many hailstorms of 3-pointers in the last two minutes, when a game deteriorates into something we'd walk away from if we saw it during a lunch-hour shirts-and-skins stumble at the downtown YMCA.

And I've heard too many people I respect criticize the 3-point shot as

it now stands. Georgetown coach John Thompson: "If a 20-footer is worth three, then getting an open layup should be worth four." Writer John Feinstein: "The 3-point shot from the current distance is bad for the game. Move it back to the NBA distance, and it'd do what it was supposed to do. Only a few players could shoot well from there consistently."

Though Knight's 1987 team won the national championship with the help of guard Steve Alford's uncanny 3-point shooting, the coach is critical of the shot. Before a Final Four semifinal that year, Knight passed NCAA rulesmaker Ed Steitz, who long had crusaded for the 3-pointer. "I hope your baby's not about to kill us," Knight told Steitz.

The passing years have only hardened Knight's opinion. After a 91-80 victory over Notre Dame last season, Knight said, "I'm not sure there's anybody who dislikes the 3-point shot more than I do. Notre Dame hit nine and we hit four and that's five points. I just like the game like it used to be. God, I hate this game."

Knight hates the quick and easy fix of a 3-pointer, first because quick-and-easy offends his work ethic and second because it diminishes the power of defense. "Somebody's always got somebody who can handle the ball and penetrate," Knight said, "so you penetrate and they throw it back and they shoot the '3.' Before, when that was a two-point shot, a lot of people were reluctant to shoot it so there'd be another thrust to the basket. Then defenses could contain offenses a lot better."

And leave it to Knight to remember the late Ed Steitz. "I hope he's in heaven," the coach said, "but I hope they gave him a tough time getting there. I hope somebody got on his ass. I hope St. Peter looked at Ed and said, 'I don't like that 3-point shot.'"

TSN

Dave Kindred is a contributing writer for THE SPORTING NEWS.

There are few coaches who don't appreciate a good golf analogy, so they'll clearly understand the suggestion that Jim Calhoun is a lot like one of those PGA pros classified as "the best player never to win a major."

Calhoun has 520 career wins. He has three 30-win seasons this decade. He twice has entered the NCAA Tournament with a No. 1 seed. He and his Connecticut Huskies, though, have not made it inside the Final Four door. Is this a problem? It depends on your perspective, as if anyone really maintains perspective when it comes to an issue as emotional as the tournament.

"I'd much rather be placed in that situation," Calhoun says, "than be one of those guys just barely hanging onto his job."

Until the Huskies reach the Final Four, they will continue to be categorized with some of this decade's more spectacular "failures." UConn's history contains elements common to the Buffalo Bills and Atlanta Braves. But at least the Bills made it to four Super Bowls, and the Braves do have that one title to call their own. But those teams didn't have to reinvent themselves four times over the course of the decade. UConn had the Tate George Huskies, the Chris Smith Huskies, the Ray Allen Huskies and the Richard Hamilton Huskies.

They've all been Calhoun's Huskies, of course, and they've been phenomenally successful in the tournament despite the lack of a crowning achievement, including three appearances in the Elite Eight in the 1990s. Their 16-7 NCAA record this decade represents more tournament wins than all but seven schools.

"We've knocked on the door pretty good," says Calhoun, whose team returns all five starters from last year's 32-5 squad. "It's not like we've had a bunch of teams that keep getting knocked out in the first round. We've made some pretty good runs at this."

The stumbles, though, still must sting:

- Christian Laettner's audition for the legendary shot that vanquished Kentucky two years later was a 17-foot buzzer-beater to eliminate UConn in overtime in the 1990 East Regional final.

BY MIKE DECOURCY

Scouting the nation

- Playing Florida in 1994 in the Sweet 16 in Miami, All-American forward Donyell Marshall missed two free throws in the final three seconds that would have won a game UConn eventually lost in overtime.

- The Huskies were stuck playing UCLA in the West final at Oakland in 1995 thanks to Tyus Edney's coast-to-coast drive to defeat Missouri in the second round. Calhoun believes the Bruins were the one team good enough and fast enough to beat UConn.

- Last year's team was sentenced to an East final against North Carolina in Greensboro, N.C., where fans treated the entire weekend like a Tar Heels home series.

Aside from another dash of bad luck, what might stop UConn again is sophomore point guard Khalid El-Amin's tendency to take unnecessary chances, or perhaps a matchup against a team expert at controlling the ball and driving from the wings, where the Huskies' defense is most susceptible.

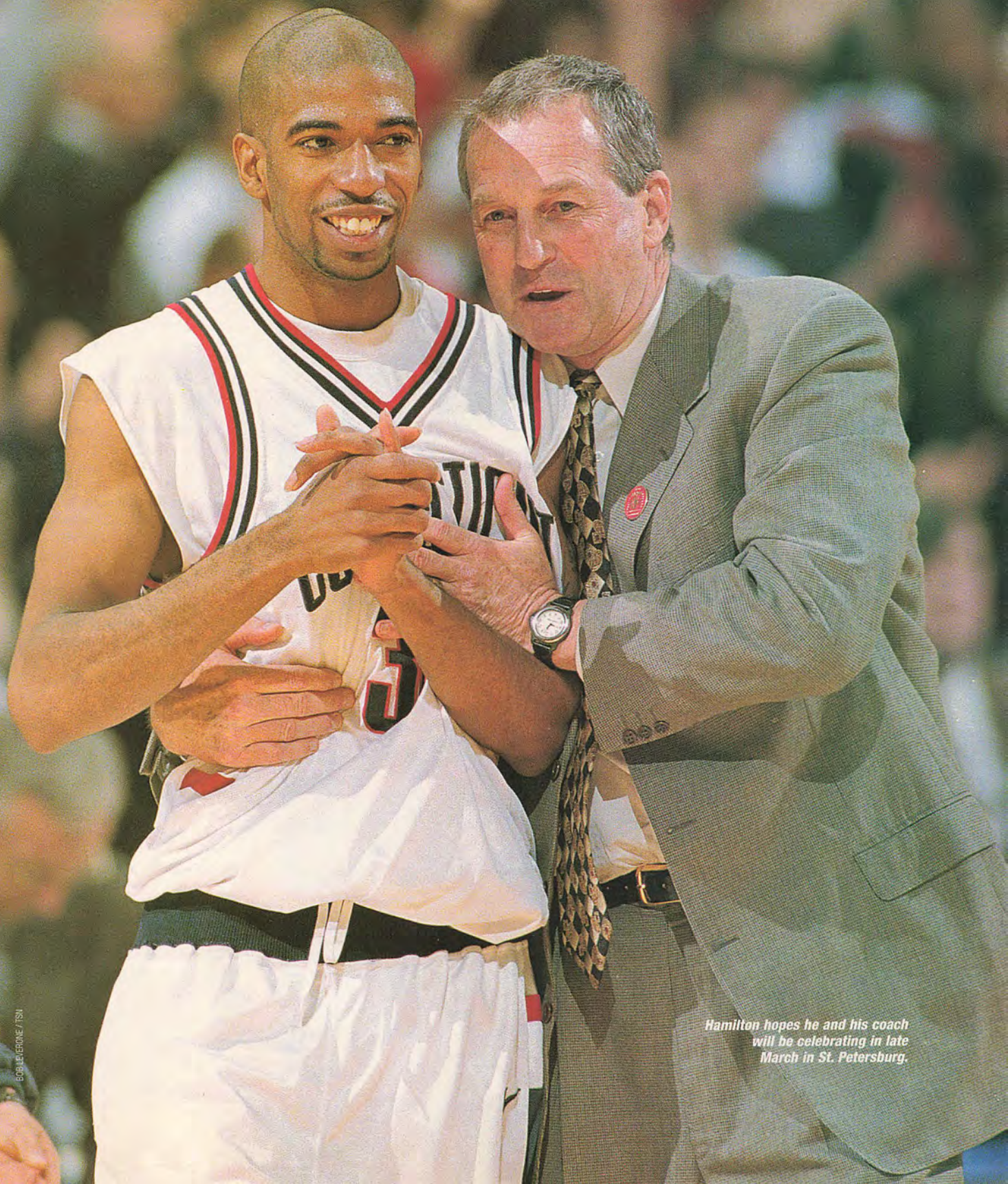
"When we were a young team playing Carolina, our guys were getting questions about, 'Can Connecticut finally win the big one?' At that time, we were 32-4," Calhoun says, "and Khalid El-Amin has no idea Laettner beat the buzzer. ... Khalid didn't have any knowledge of that, nor should he."

The beauty of Connecticut's run is how much it has achieved without dependence on flavor-of-the-month recruiting. There have been only three McDonald's All-Americans this decade: Marshall, Hamilton and El-Amin. UConn has been like Arizona in that regard, always replenishing itself with players who are good and want to get better.

"I recently heard (former Bills coach) Marv Levy speak," Calhoun says, "and he was wearing a scarlet letter called four Super Bowls. What a great, great scarlet letter to have."

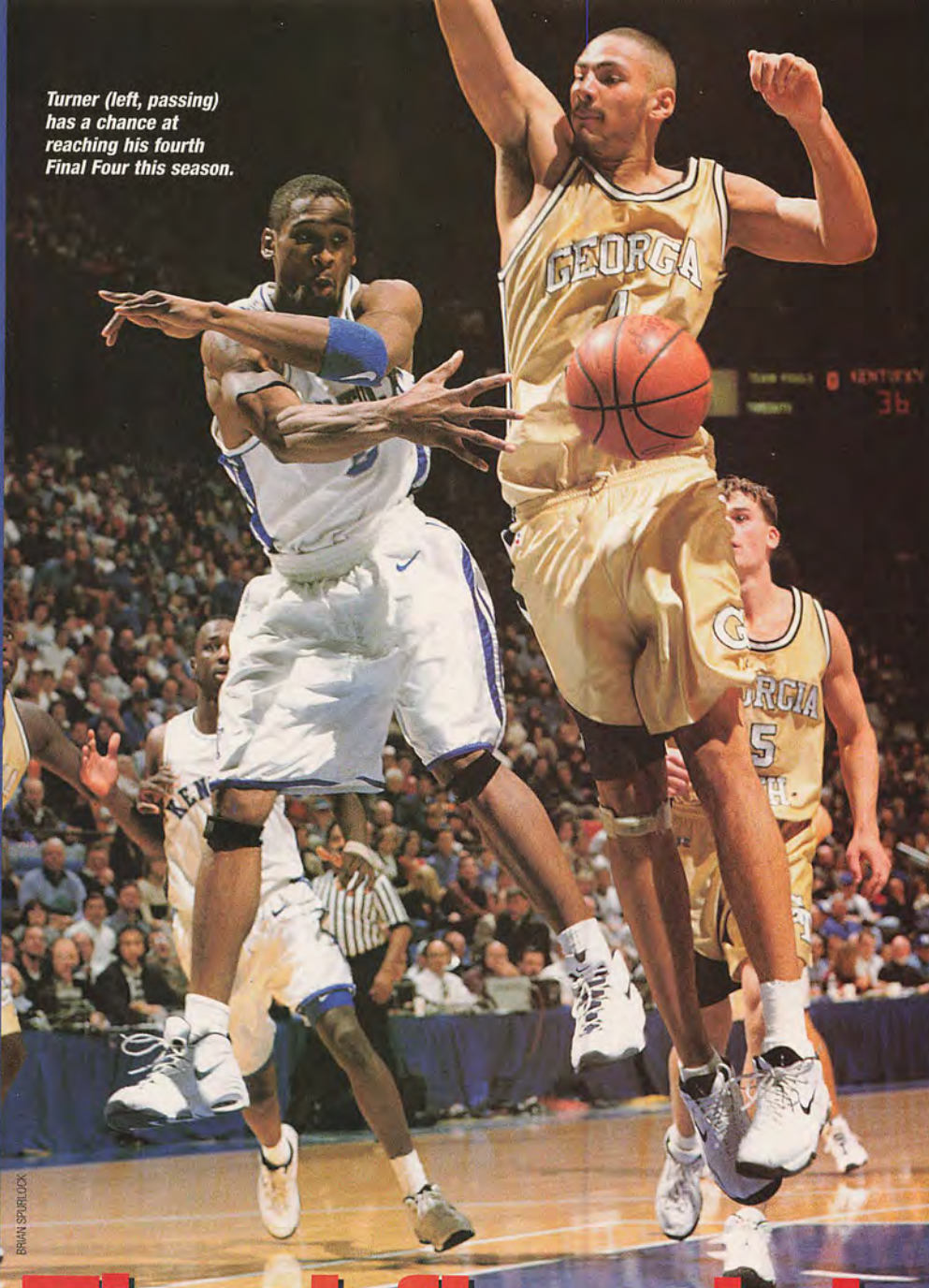
"(Former Michigan and Iowa State coach) Johnny Orr said to me that you spoil the hell out of them when they actually think you can do the whole thing. You've got to win 18-20 games, because when you start to win 30, they think you can be Carolina or Duke."

This is the season Connecticut kicks down the door to the Final Four



*Hamilton hopes he and his coach
will be celebrating in late
March in St. Petersburg.*

Turner (left, passing) has a chance at reaching his fourth Final Four this season.



Final flourish

There may be no better college basketball trivia question than this: Who was the first player to compete in four Final Fours? Anyone who gets the answer without the help of a record book needs some other kind of help.

The answer? Greg Koubek. He was a McDonald's All-American, a starter on Duke's first championship team who in 1991 became the first player to bounce a ball on four Final Four floors. The others with that distinction are fellow Blue Devils Christian Laettner and Brian Davis, who joined the exclusive club a year later.

That total could be increased by the end of this season, which is to say one player has a chance to do it. Kentucky point guard Wayne Turner is shooting for his fourth Final Four, a record that cannot be broken.

Turner may have been in line to stand alone in one category; he could have entered the year in position to play in four consecutive title games. One problem, though. He didn't play in the 1996 championship against Syracuse, the only time he hasn't gotten off the bench while at Kentucky.

Inquiring minds

Every team has questions to answer, but these five appear most compelling:

• **Who will shoot for Kentucky?** Scoring wasn't a strong suit for the national champions, and the Wildcats lost primary weapons Jeff Sheppard and Nazr Mohammed. Now what? They could rely on 6-7 Tayshaun Prince, but freshmen rarely bear that responsibility on title teams. Heshimu Evans has been a consummate role player, but his role may shift toward stardom.

• **Can Jason Capel carry North Carolina on his back?** Rumors of disk problems followed the 6-8 freshman—the son of Old Dominion coach Jeff Sr. and the brother of former Duke guard Jeff Jr.—through the offseason, but he must be very good for North Carolina to escape a serious slide. There doesn't seem to be anyone else that can consistently score.

• **Will there be another Nick Van Exel?**

Cincinnati has gone through two consecutive seasons in which its starting point guard has failed to make a 3-point shot. Michael Horton returns for another year, but the arrival of 5-10 freshman Steve Logan suggests Horton either will consistently compete or consistently spectate.

• **What will it take for Temple to score again?**

It didn't used to be this bad. The Owls of Mark Macon, Tim Perry and Mike Vreeswyk could put the ball in the basket, whereas last year's team ranked 11th in the 12-team Atlantic 10 in field-goal percentage (.402) and 10th in scoring (66 ppg). It's long past time for Temple to be smarter and more careful with the ball and more judicious about shot selection.

• **Can Chris Herren play point guard?** The playmaking and leadership—or lack thereof—of Dominick Young and Rafer Alston are high on the list of the many reasons Fresno State has failed to make the tournament each of the past four seasons. Herren has the skills and shooting range to be an effective point man, but he isn't accustomed to a leadership role. He'll decide whether Jerry Tarkanian can get back to the NCAAs.



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353

The oven timer may be clicking toward the warning bell for these coaches:

1. **John MacLeod, Notre Dame.** The Irish haven't been in the NCAA Tournament since 1990 and have averaged 13 wins in MacLeod's seven seasons. To think these people used to complain about Digger Phelps.
2. **Ralph Willard, Pittsburgh.** The Panthers haven't been to the tournament since Willard arrived in 1994, and there never has been a sense of what Willard wants his team to be. To think these people used to complain about Paul Evans.
3. **Speedy Morris, La Salle.** There's no question he can coach and recruit—it hasn't been that long (1989-90) since the Explorers were 29-1—but the jump to the Atlantic 10 has hurt. Morris could use a big year.

Escape from exile

Academic circumstances kept these guys off the court last season, but now they're hungry:

Lamar Odom, 6-9 forward, Rhode Island. It was a blessing for the Rams that Odom had to wait a year to play, as he would've jumbled the chemistry of last year's Elite Eight team. But this season's group needs the offensive dynamic he can provide. Odom could become an All-American this season.

Jimmie Hunter, 6-4 guard, Memphis. He can't join the Tigers until the semester break, but there are Memphians who swear he has more talent than former AAU teammates Tony Harris (Tennessee) and Robert O'Kelley (Wake Forest), who were SEC and ACC rookies of the year, respectively, last season. Hunter is a remarkable one-on-one player, but he must learn what it's like to play with responsibility.

Cory Bradford, 6-2 guard, Illinois. Another member of that same Memphis class is Bradford, who is being counted on to help the Illini overcome significant talent losses. Bradford is strong and tough and an underrated shooter.

Mark Karcher, 6-5 guard/forward, Temple. A McDonald's All-American who seems ideal for the John Chaney system, Karcher could provide consistency on the perimeter.

Hire calling

It was not the best offseason for athletic directors charged with choosing coaches. Among the hirings that still are puzzling:

• **Clyde Drexler, Houston.** If the intent was to get publicity, hiring Gene Hackman or John Turturro might have been a better idea; at least those guys portrayed basketball coaches in the movies. Houston should have searched for someone more qualified than Drexler, who will regret choosing this occupation instead of retirement.

• **Lou Henson, New Mexico State.** He did a marvelous job in his one season as interim coach, and he deserved to be paid for his work, but at what point does this school start building a future?

• **Brian Ellerbe, Michigan.** One of the half-dozen best coaching jobs goes to a guy who just happened to be standing in the right place at the right time. The Wolverines have been through this before.

Hidden TREASURES

Not all the best players flood your TV set each night via ESPN. You'll have to look harder to find these guys, but it's worth it:

• **Lonnie Cooper, 6-5 guard, Louisiana Tech.** A devastatingly quick release and mind-bending range make Cooper one of the game's more entertaining guards. He averaged 17 points last season. Imagine what he'll do if he gets his field-goal percentage above 40 percent.

• **Isaac Spencer, 6-6 forward, Murray State.** Not the typical Ohio Valley Conference star, Spencer is more of a grinder than a flyer. He's murder on the boards and rarely takes a shot he's not likely to make.

• **Craig "Speedy" Claxton, 5-10 guard, Hofstra.** With his 224 assists and 16.3 scoring average, Claxton had a hand in more than 40 percent of the points

the Flying Dutchmen scored last season. He giveth, and he taketh.

• **Mike Wozniak, 6-2 guard, Cal Poly.** You see all these guys with their 3-point percentages over .450, but not many are daring enough to chuck 200 in a year. OK, so neither is Wozniak; he threw up only 199 last year. He was only a sophomore, though.



Claxton's passing and shooting skills make him a valuable Flying Dutchman.

Seeing 20/20/20/20/20/20/20

On the list of perennial powers, one of these schools doesn't fit: North Carolina, UCLA, Kentucky, Arizona, Kansas, Cincinnati, Marquette.

Not a tough call, is it? Indeed, you don't know whether to call Marquette the Warriors or Golden Eagles, and you wouldn't think you'd be calling them at all when getting together such an esteemed group. Marquette fits, though: These seven schools are the only ones in Division I that possess a current string of six consecutive 20-win seasons.

Marquette was the only one that needed success in the NIT (twice) to reach that number, but it's still pretty good company to keep. When the Golden Eagles made it with a win against Auburn in last spring's NIT, coach Mike Deane admitted keeping that string alive was more important than advancing in the tournament.

"Those are great schools," guard Brian Wardle says. "It says a lot about the school and the coaching staff. It says a lot about the program and Marquette."

Overwhelming assistants

These guys ought to be running their own Division I programs by this time next year:

• **Matt Doherty, Kansas.** There must be some sort of expiration date by which Roy Williams' assistants must be hired as coaches.

• **Paul Graham, Oklahoma State.** How many more guys does he have to talk across the border from Texas before he gets his own program?

• **Bobby Gonzalez, Virginia.** His peers respect him as one of the elite recruiters, and he has Rick Pitino as a reference. He may be at UVa just long enough for one tour of Monticello.

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AUGUST 1998

Pro Football Starts
College Football Starts
Baseball Road Trips

SEPTEMBER 1998

U.S. Open Tennis, New York, NY
MLB Playoffs
Ryder Cup, Brookline, MA
Baseball Road Trips

OCTOBER 1998

World Series, TBA
Pro Hockey Starts

NOVEMBER 1998

Pro Basketball Starts
College Basketball Starts

DECEMBER 1998

College Bowl Games
NFL Playoffs

JANUARY 1999

NFL Super Bowl, Miami, FL
NHL All Star Game, Tampa Bay, FL
Orange Bowl, Miami, FL
Rose Bowl, Pasadena, CA

FEBRUARY 1999

NFL Pro Bowl, Honolulu, HI
NBA All Star Game, Philadelphia, PA
Daytona 500, Daytona, FL

MARCH 1999

Spring Training
NCAA Final Four, St. Petersburg, FL

APRIL 1999

Pro Baseball Starts
The Masters, Augusta, GA
NBA & NHL Playoffs

MAY 1999

Kentucky Derby, Louisville, KY
Indy 500, Indianapolis, IN
NBA & NHL Playoffs
Baseball Road Trips

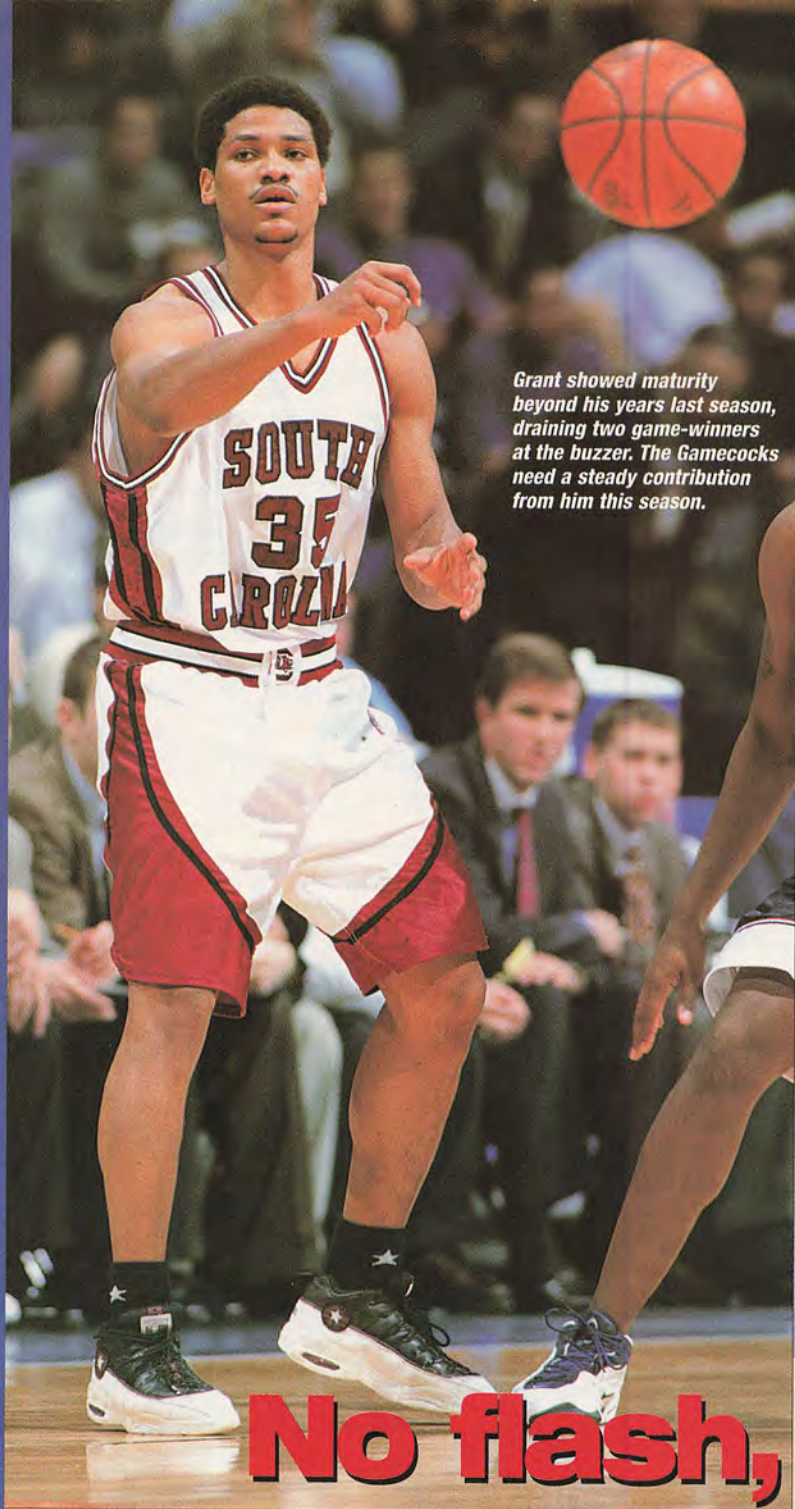
JUNE 1999

U.S. Open Golf, Pinehurst, NC
NBA & NHL Playoffs
Baseball Road Trips

JULY 1999

MLB All Star Game, Boston, MA
Football Induction, Canton, OH
Baseball Induction, Cooperstown, NY
Baseball Road Trips

Any Game ... Any Place ... Any TimeSM!



Grant showed maturity beyond his years last season, draining two game-winners at the buzzer. The Gamecocks need a steady contribution from him this season.

No flash, no crash

There are some players who make winning plays for their teams without scoring a lot of points, piling up big rebounding numbers—or diving on the floor for show. These are guys we want on our side:

Kevin Freeman, 6-7 forward, Connecticut. He has a pretty jumper, great spring and a decent handle on the ball. At UConn, he's a power forward, more interested in victories than proving to everyone he can make 3-pointers.

Antonio Grant, 6-5 forward, South Carolina. He averaged only 6.6 points and shot 34 percent from 3-point range, but he made two buzzer-beating shots in one week last season as a freshman. With that kind of heart, there are bigger things ahead.

Alex Jensen, 6-9 forward, Utah. He isn't much of a shooter, but he makes the shot when it matters. He can't run, but he

gets out on the break in a crunch. If there is a prototypical Utah player, this is the guy.

Preston Murphy, 6-1 guard, Rhode Island. Is Murphy a point guard or shooting guard? His role is so elusive, you hardly know he's on the court, but he always winds up with his 10 points a game and shoots 40 percent on 3-pointers.

Travis Reed, 6-7 forward, UCLA. In a town where the character actors who do all the heavy lifting rarely are rewarded, a scrapper such as Reed will find it difficult to get attention. If he finds it equally difficult to get playing time, the Bruins will be sorry. **TSN**

Mike DeCourcy covers college basketball for the Cincinnati Enquirer and writes a weekly column for THE SPORTING NEWS. E-mail him at decourcy@sportingnews.com.

If at first you don't succeed ...

The list of transfers who could make a significant impact at their new colleges is so long, it helps to divide it into some manner to make it more manageable. This is one way.

Those who came from Indiana:

Jason Collier, 7-0 center, Georgia Tech. How the Yellow Jackets will combine Collier with 6-11 Alvin Jones should be one of the year's more intriguing lineup maneuvers. Collier, eligible at the semester break, has the perimeter skills to play facing the basket on offense. But if there are any more power forwards like Antawn Jamison in the ACC, Collier could be in trouble defensively.

Neil Reed, 6-2 guard, Southern Miss. Reed is an NBA prospect with nice range on his jumper and the ability to create off the dribble for himself and his teammates. He doesn't have a lot of teammates worth creating for, so Reed could put up some big scoring numbers.

Everybody else:

Courtney Alexander, 6-5 guard, Fresno State. Betting on Alexander is risky, but he's a tremendous scorer. And if we're wrong, we've only spent a few lines of type on the Virginia transfer. Jerry Tarkanian gets him for the whole year.

Scoonie Penn, 5-10 guard, Ohio State. It's possible no player will have a greater influence on his new team than this former Boston College star, who followed coach Jim O'Brien to Columbus. The Buckeyes need Penn's scoring and his creative skills, and probably his leadership, too. The Penn-Michael Redd backcourt will be one of the best in the Big Ten, which is the best thing anyone has said about OSU basketball since Jimmy Jackson was on campus earlier this decade.

Charles Thomas, 6-4 guard, Eastern Kentucky. The former Minnesota Golden Gopher adds pro-level scoring ability to a team that needs any kind of scoring ability.

Damion Walker, 6-7 forward, New Mexico. Walker left TCU partly because he wasn't the offensive focus. He won't be with the Lobos, either, not when Kenny Thomas is around. And there'll be some redundancy when the two low-post specialists play in tandem. But Walker is powerful when he has the ball inside.

LaDrell Whitehead, 5-9 guard, Ohio University. Whitehead averaged 21.7 points for Wyoming when he was playing in the WAC. What's he going to do to the MAC?

TOP 25

1 Connecticut

The goal is not the Final Four. That is a goal, just like winning 30 again and another Big East championship. The goal is to win the NCAA Tournament. "We've talked about trying to win a national championship," coach Jim Calhoun says. "We have eight of our top nine back and three recruits who should be very good, unless the coach screws them up. If we stay hungry and healthy ... those H's are very important." The other important "H" is Hamilton, as in Richard, as in 21.5 points per game. He and guard Khalid El-Amin give UConn the most devastating wing tandem since Kentucky's Tony Delk and Ron Mercer. The Huskies can play it big (with 6-11 Souleymane Wane at power forward to join 6-11 center Jake Voskuhl) or fast (with 6-7 Kevin Freeman at the power spot). This team is ridiculously deep, so deep a talented guard such as Albert Mouring is struggling to find playing time. The newcomer to watch is Edmund Saunders, a beefy forward who was a Prop 48 last year. Connecticut defends well, pressuring the ball with defensive ace Ricky Moore and attacking on the wings with Hamilton, Freeman and Rashamel Jones. Why do the Huskies win it all now, when they've not yet made the Final Four? One word: El-Amin. He is a creative force no top team can match or, apparently, defuse.

G/F Richard Hamilton



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

2. DUKE



BRIAN SPURLOCK

How many times will you read about Duke's Killer B's—Elton Brand, Shane Battier and Chris Burgess—before the season's done? Thousands, so get used to it, because the Blue Devils' season will last a while. There's so much talent here that gifted Chris Carrawell might be shifted to a sixth-man role, leaving McDonald's All-Americans Nate James and Corey Maggette even farther down the bench. What keeps the Devils from No. 1 is a lack of backcourt depth behind playmaker William Avery and shooter Trajan Langdon. That could make them vulnerable to a quick, pressing team (UConn, for instance). But come March, Duke should be in St. Petersburg—and not to watch spring training.

G William Avery

4. UCLA



SCOTT QUINTARD / UCLA

No coach has dealt so well with as much nonsense the past couple of years as Steve Lavin, and now he has to win with freshmen. They're really good freshmen, of course: Wing JaRon Rush and center Dan Gadzuric were among the top six prospects in the nation, and some suggest forward Jerome Moiso is better than either. Also, keep an eye on off-guard Ray Young. Baron Davis, if he has two good legs, is one of the nation's top point guards, and there is a nice group of role players (Travis Reed, Rico Hines, Earl Watson, Billy Knight) to complement the stars. The question is whether the rookies will defend at a high level by tournament time. But if all Lavin has to do is coach, that could be a snap.

G Earl Watson

6. STANFORD



ED NESSEN / TSN

The Cardinal reached the 1998 Final Four by making up for 39 so-so minutes against Rhode Island with 60 sensational seconds, but that doesn't make this team fast. That lack of frontcourt speed is about the only complaint that can be lodged against Stanford, but it may be what prevents a return Final Four trip. Some of that disadvantage could be overcome by the development of the athletic Collins twins, Jarron and Jason, and by the Cardinal's excellent guards, led by Arthur Lee and Kris Weems. It's also a must that Stanford forces quick teams to deal with rugged Mark Madsen's low-post expertise. And if 7-1 Tim Young ever decided not to let Stanford lose ... well, he wouldn't be Tim Young then, would he?

G Arthur Lee

3. KENTUCKY



ED NESSEN / TSN

In the past few years, Kentucky has watched Rick Pitino, Antoine Walker, Tony Delk, Ron Mercer, Walter McCarty and Derek Anderson bolt. So the Wildcats are supposed to miss Nazr Mohammed? The 'Cats have what they need in Scott Padgett, Wayne Turner, Jamaal Magloire and Tayshaun Prince to advance to a fourth consecutive Final Four, one of the few things this program *hasn't* accomplished. The team is even bigger than last year's edition, hard as that is to believe, and could lean more heavily on forward Heshimu Evans, a consummate winner. The problem Tubby Smith needs to solve is how to produce scoring. But then, he struggled with that last season all the way to a national title.

F Scott Padgett

5. MARYLAND



ED NESSEN / TSN

You don't get many chances in the ACC to make North Carolina chase you, which is why the Terrapins will play this season at full speed. Maryland has an extremely quick team that will get even quicker with sophomore forward Terrence Morris' role growing and stud guard Steve Francis arriving from Allegany (Md.) C.C., where points multiply like guppies. Francis could play either backcourt spot, and most likely will. He'll get help from inconsistent Terrell Stokes. The Terps lost their best shooters in Rodney Elliott and Sarunas Jasikevicius, so it'll be essential to generate offense with defense, and it also wouldn't hurt for star forward Laron Profit to be a shade more efficient. Beefy Obinna Ekezie needs rebounding help.

C Obinna Ekezie

7. MICHIGAN STATE



ROBERT SEALE / TSN

It can be a tough thing, to be a great team that's short on great players. With the exception of star point guard Mateen Cleaves, everybody in the rotation does one or two things well, but no one does everything. That lack of talent means the Spartans must cling to their system when opponents threaten, which happens constantly to top 10 teams. Cleaves is gifted enough to enforce that stability, forward Andre Hutson is an emerging star and shooting guard Thomas Kelley is a significant addition after missing last year with a broken foot. A team of role players, such as rebounder Antonio Smith and shooter Jason Klein, playing their roles can accomplish much. Just ask last year's Kentucky squad

G Charlie Bell

8. OKLAHOMA STATE



BRIAN SPURLOCK

The miracle of Stillwater is not that this system works, but rather that players keep turning up to play this brand of ball and people keep showing up to watch. No one supposedly wants to see defense and offensive execution, and every player reportedly wants to press and run. But it's not just Eddie Sutton who will make the Cowboys great. It's efficient small forward Desmond Mason, sweet shooting guard Adrian Peterson and point guard Doug Gottlieb. And don't forget guard Joe Adkins. Talent and size are present, and there is the advantage that no one is less fun to play. If there is a question, it is the frontcourt, where two JC transfers, along with Arkansas transfer Glendon Alexander, must help.

G Doug Gottlieb

9. KANSAS



ED NESSEN / TSN

Pity the poor Jayhawks, who have only five McDonald's All-Americans left on the roster. But are they the right five? Wing Kenny Gregory is a fine talent but seems ill-suited for the Kansas system in a Darrin Hancock sort of way. Coach Roy Williams has to figure out whether he wants senior Ryan Robertson or freshman Jeff Boschee to run this team and whether he wants quick-striking Lester Earl or 7-footer Eric Chenoweth to be his man in the middle. T.J. Pugh is still around to scrap in the paint, too. Forward Ashante Johnson, a JC transfer who began his career at Utah, also may help. But there is no consensus about what kind of team this might be, which makes it difficult to figure how good it can become.

G/F Kenny Gregory

10. TEMPLE



TSN

The Owls have the veteran hands, frontcourt power, capable newcomers and ingenious coach to make them look promising in the preseason, but let's not forget the image they left in the 1998 Big Dance: an abysmal first-round exit against West Virginia. As much as Temple is expected to be a power, it's not going to happen without significant improvement. Point guard Pepe Sanchez's decision-making has to become better, and shooting guard Rasheed Brokenborough can't be so uninspired with the ball. It's not enough to take shots; he has to make plays. Swingman Mark Karcher, a Prop 48, looks like a difference-maker. Freshman Kevin Lyde will provide frontcourt punch with Lamont Barnes.

G Pepe Sanchez

11. ARIZONA

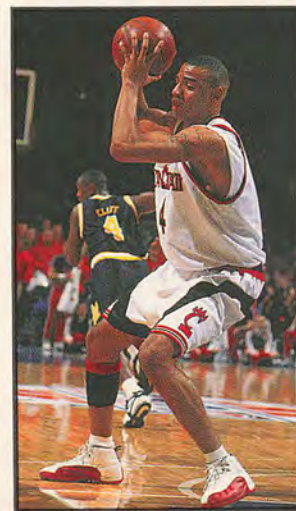


TSN

The Wildcats lost their All-American point guard, but maybe that's no big deal since Mike Bibby wasn't even the best assists guy on the team. Really. If you go minute-by-minute, Jason Terry averaged more assists. This is not to suggest Terry will improve the Wildcats; rather, it's that he likely won't let this young, athletic team implode. Arizona's frontcourt is in the capable hands of A.J. Bramlett and Eugene Edgerson, and freshman Michael Wright could be ready to help a lot. But a lack of dominant upperclassmen on the wings indicates freshmen Ruben Douglas and Richard Jefferson must make up for the loss of Miles Simon and Michael Dickerson. This team won't be as perimeter-oriented as in the past.

G Jason Terry

12. CINCINNATI



TSN

Remember the name Pete Mickeal, because it may be easy to forget when watching the Bearcats play. You'll see Kenyon Martin's blocks and Melvin Levett's high-flying dunks, but Mickeal, a 6-7 small forward, is expected to provide the foundation for those pyrotechnics. That's unusual for a junior college recruit, but Mickeal is unusual. He led his Indian Hills C.C. team to 72 consecutive wins. Other newcomers to watch are freshman guard Steve Logan, Prop 48 forward Aaron McGhee and big man Jermaine Tate, an Ohio State transfer. The Bearcats, who have lost in the second round of the past two NCAA tournaments, need to find a point guard (Michael Horton? JC transfer Alvin Mitchell? Logan?) and shoot better.

C Kenyon Martin

13. NORTH CAROLINA



ED NESSEN / TSN

We know how coach Bill Guthridge reacted when handed Antawn Jamison and Vince Carter, but Brendan Haywood and Vasco Evtimov aren't the same deal. This team lacks frontcourt speed, which should mandate a defensive redesign similar to that from 1996. The Tar Heels have outstanding point guards in Ronald Curry and Ed Cota, and they may work well together. Just try pressing them. The problem: Who will score for this deep but inexperienced team? How about Jason Capel or Max Owens. Haywood, a 7-foot center, would have been more ready to help had Guthridge not misused him last season, but his development and the return of Ademola Okulaja will help keep UNC in the ACC elite.

G Ed Cota

14. TENNESSEE



UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

The Volunteers are a recruiting analyst's dream, with Tony Harris at the point, Vincent Yarbrough to score from the wing and Charles Hathaway and C.J. Black inside. What more could a coach want? But last year's team didn't always add up to the sum of its parts, to some degree because of Hathaway's nearly season-long absence with a blood-clot problem in his shoulder but mostly because of sporadic defense and Harris' sometimes sketchy shot selection. UT, which has all five starters back from its first NCAA team since 1988-89, needs a better idea of what it wants to achieve with the ball. And it wouldn't hurt to stop the other guys more often when they have it.

C Charles Hathaway

15. NEW MEXICO

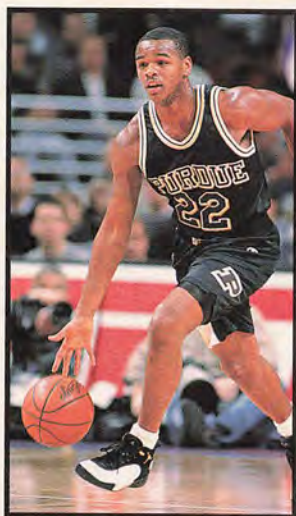


UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

"Survive The Weekend." That should be the Lobos' motto, stamped on T-shirts and bumper stickers and computer screen savers. Three years of star forward Kenny Thomas' presence have resulted in three consecutive second-round NCAA Tournament exits. This is another New Mexico team with Sweet 16 potential, though it lacks inside depth. The Lobos didn't make complete use of their size last year, averaging 23 3-point attempts a game. Personnel changes may get them back to executing more precisely and allowing Thomas and TCU transfer Damion Walker to overwhelm foes. It's tougher to shoot yourself out of the tourney from the low post. If shots are needed, Lamont Long can oblige.

G Lamont Long

16. PURDUE



ED NESSEN / TSN

The old Boilermakers slowly are drifting out of the system—"slowly" being a word not used by chance. The Purdue lineup keeps getting quicker and more versatile and should become more lethal as it gains a firmer grasp on coach Gene Keady's defensive system. Wings Jaraan Cornell and Mike Robinson could be the best scoring tandem in the Big Ten, each capable of driving or hitting from the perimeter. Oregon State transfer Carson Cunningham is another offensive spark. The biggest concerns are interior defense and chemistry. Forward Brian Cardinal will give his all. He needs help inside from the McQuays—Gary and Greg, a JC transfer—as well as newcomers Jamaal Davis and Cameron Stephens.

G Jaraan Cornell

17. UTAH



ED NESSEN / TSN

The question is not how the Utes will recover from heavy personnel losses that followed last season's national title game appearance. Rather, the question is this: How can any team with point guard Andre Miller lose? His Goodwill Games play demonstrated again why it's dangerous to underestimate Miller, or his team. He does not have as much to work with this season, with Michael Doleac and Drew Hansen gone. But Hanno Mottola is capable of scoring in the high teens and Alex Jensen figures to improve. Whatever team Rick Majerus coaches is going to defend to the death. Any team foolish enough to let the Utes stay close in the NCAA Tournament may well watch Miller again drive them toward the Final Four.

F Alex Jensen

18. SYRACUSE



JAY CRUICKEL / SHUTLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

Jason Hart has been a Syracuse point guard just long enough to have developed a pack of critics. It happens to nearly every Orangemen playmaker if they're at it long enough: Pearl Washington, Adrian Autry, Lazarus Sims. OK, so Hart doesn't shoot that well and turns it over too much. People might want to see him as a junior before making a final proclamation. Hart directed SU to a surprising Sweet 16 trip last year, and could do better with Etan Thomas, Ryan Blackwell, Eric Williams and Damone Brown manning the front line another year and Elvir Ovcina working the high post. The search is on for an off-guard. It would be nice if somebody makes jumpers; it might even be a certain junior point guard.

F Ryan Blackwell

19. XAVIER



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

No team had worse offseason luck than Xavier, which lost leading scorer Darnell Williams to knee surgery in June. The timing of that injury did give the Musketeers half a year to figure how to compensate, although it only took half a second to recognize his logical replacement: 6-5 freshman Lloyd Price, perhaps the highest-rated recruit in the program's history. This still will be a team dependent on speed, although guards Gary Lumpkin and Lenny Brown must make better decisions and everyone must recognize that forward James Posey needs to be a focal point of the attack. While depth is good, Xavier will rely too much on youngsters for post help with Torraye Braggs and T.J. Johnson gone.

G Gary Lumpkin

20. MEMPHIS

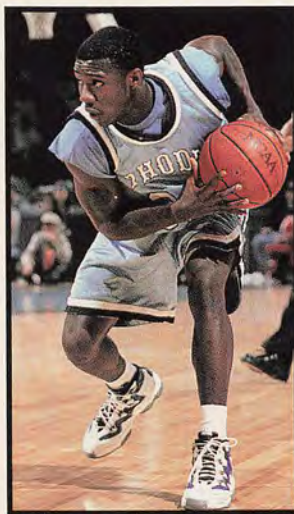


UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Forward Jermaine Ousley is from Milwaukee. Forward Omar Sneed is from Beaumont, Texas. Freshman guard Dinno Daniels is from New Orleans. Big man Shamel Jones transferred from Georgetown. What kind of carpet-bagging Tigers team is this? A pretty darn good one, and there are enough hooping hometowners (forward Paris London, guard Marcus Moody) to make Memphocentric fans comfortable. With a healthy back, Ousley could be a powerful defensive presence, and Sneed is just that on offense. The problem is that two key players, point guard Detric Golden and wing Jimmie Hunter, won't be eligible until the semester break. How many wins and how much progress will that cost the Tigers?

F Jermaine Ousley

21. RHODE ISLAND



ED NESSEN/TSN

For such a small state, Rhode Island has delivered more than its share of basketball legends: "Bad News" Barnes, Ernie D., Sly Williams, Silk Owens. Newcomer Lamar Odom could use a good nickname, but that might be all that's missing from his game. Even though he sat out last season, his playmaking abilities should help fill the void left by last year's excellent backcourt and keep the Rams floating near the top of the Atlantic 10. The rest of Rhode Island's players—notably center Luther Clay, forward Antonio Reynolds-Dean and guard Preston Murphy—are solid enough to give Odom the requisite assistance without getting in his way. While inexperience abounds, depth and rebounding will be good.

G Preston Murphy

22. ARKANSAS



ROBERT SEALE/TSN

The Kareem Reid years are just about over at Arkansas, and it has not been the brightest segment of the Razorbacks' decade. They reached the Final Four in 1990, '94 and '95, but Reid's years have been filled with lots of snappy passes and quick zips to the hoop—but only three tournament wins in three years. It hasn't been all his fault. Arkansas hasn't been bullish enough inside and hasn't had any one outside of guard Pat Bradley who can score consistently. Finding points still will be a challenge, but 7-footer Jason Jennings is a big enough target for Reid. It's also time for senior Derek Hood to fulfill his potential. Coach Nolan Richardson considers this six-man freshman class one of his best.

G Pat Bradley

23. CALIFORNIA

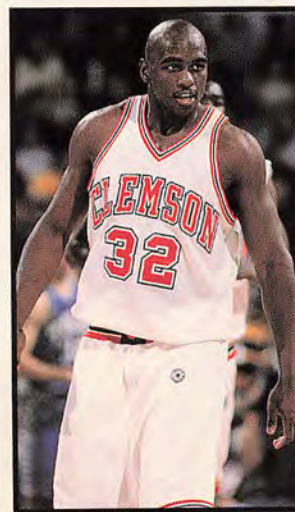


RUSS WRIGHT/CAL

Every coaching job that opens, you hear somebody suggest that school go get Ben Braun. As if you'd leave the Bay Area if you had this job. He'll again show everybody what sort of coach he is when he returns this team to the Big Dance after a deceptive sub-.500 finish. Guard Geno Carlisle is the most dangerous weapon, and Braun understands well how to take advantage of scorers. Lithe Thomas Kilgore joins Carlisle in the backcourt. Expect big things from forwards Sean Lampley and Mike Gill. The maturation of 7-0 center Francisco Elson is vital to the Golden Bears' progress. Braun didn't get as much out of his recruiting as he might have liked, but he did get depth—and more reasons to stick around.

G Geno Carlisle

24. CLEMSON



TSN

Seems that Larry Shyatt wanted to coach these Tigers so bad, he'd almost pay for the privilege. Almost. He takes over the program in a much different situation than Rick Barnes did; people expect wins. Shyatt may have better luck squeezing offense out of this group, which couldn't hit the basket last year even with former star Greg Buckner. It's a team with size in Harold Jamison, Tom Wideman and Mohamed Woni, speed in Vincent Whitt and Johnny Miller and a fine point guard in Terrell McIntyre, and the ACC isn't as imposing as usual. But the Tigers need to show they want to play as much as Shyatt, who arrives from Wyoming, wants to be their coach. Improved free-throw shooting also would help.

F Harold Jamison

25. OKLAHOMA



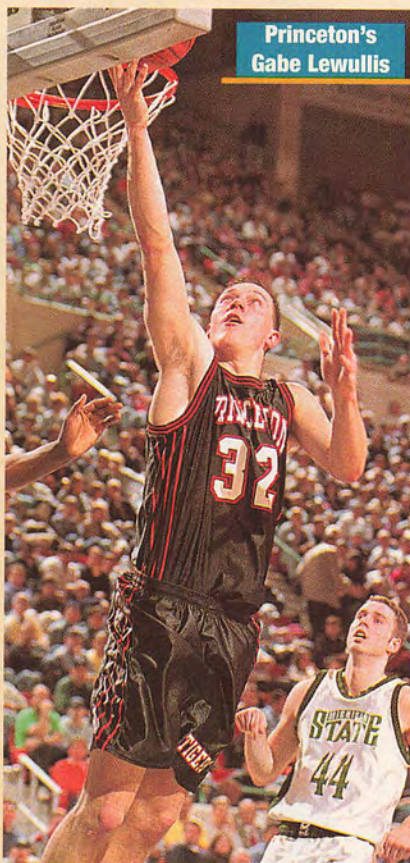
BOB LEVERONE/TSN

If Oklahoma is luckier at both ends of the season, the Sooners' roster will be intact at the start and they'll win at least one game in the NCAA Tournament. There seems little doubt the injuries that begin the year and the tourney defeats that end it are related. This is not Kelvin Sampson's best team, not with guard Corey Brewer out of the picture. Plus, experience and leadership are questions. But Michael Johnson may be ready to take over the backcourt and could have help from recovering shooter Tim Heskett (bad back). Forward Eduardo Najera keeps threatening to become a star—but that's if forward Ryan Humphrey doesn't beat him to it. They will get frontcourt help from hyped JC arrival Victor Avila.

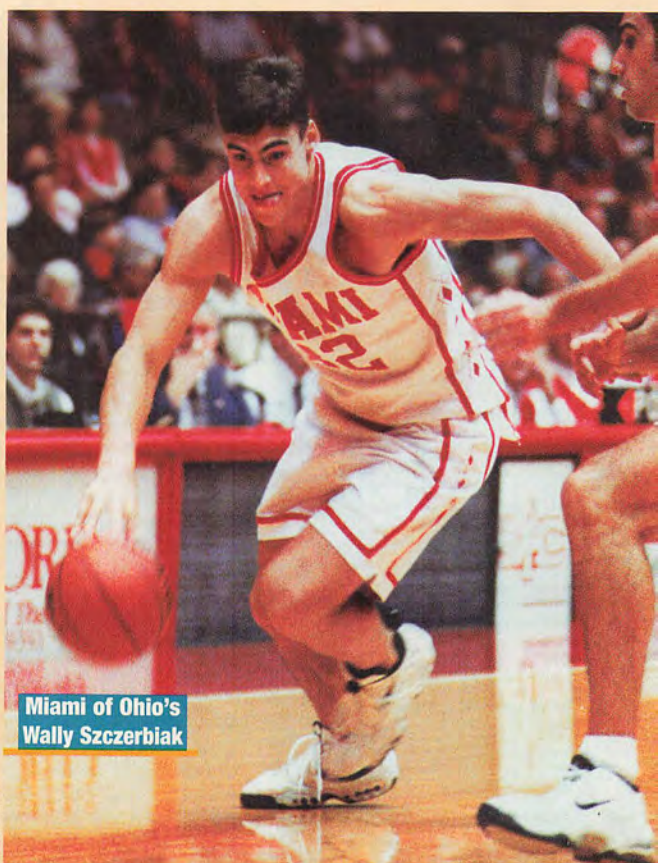
F Eduardo Najera

the rest 26- 314

KEY: *—NCAA
Tournament team;
†—NIT team



Princeton's
Gabe Lewullis



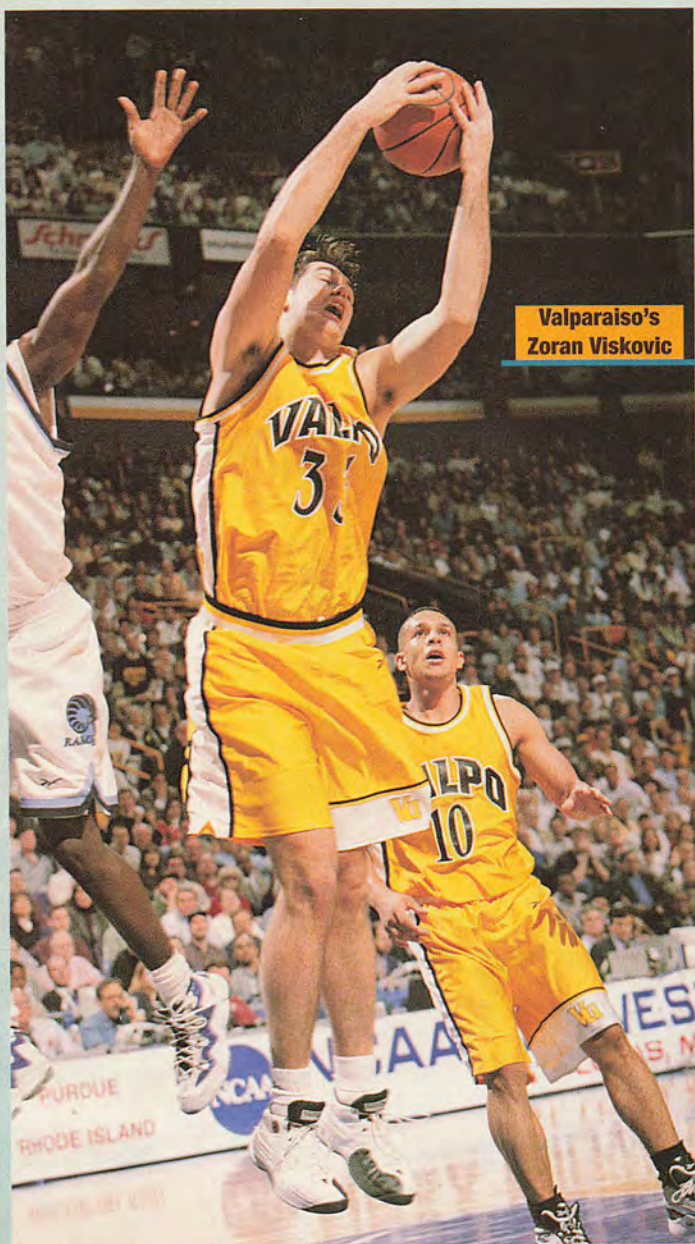
Miami of Ohio's
Wally Szczerbiak

26. UNLV*
27. Washington*
28. Wake Forest*
29. Texas*
30. NC State*
31. Minnesota*
32. St. John's*
33. Massachusetts*
34. College of Charleston†
35. Georgia*
36. Tulsa*
37. Miami (Ohio)*
38. Fresno State†
39. Iona*
40. Princeton*
41. Georgia Tech†
42. Penn State*
43. Indiana*
44. South Carolina†
45. Auburn*
46. USC†
47. Creighton*
48. UAB*
49. Gonzaga*
50. Pittsburgh*
51. George Washington†
52. Akron*
53. Detroit*
54. Missouri†
55. Georgetown†
56. SW Missouri State*
57. Iowa†

58. TCU†
59. Mississippi†
60. Miami (Fla.)†
61. Saint Mary's*
62. SMU†
63. Davidson†
64. Mississippi State†
65. Saint Louis†
66. Iowa State†
67. Nebraska
68. Dayton†
69. Florida†
70. Oregon
71. Villanova†
72. Arkansas State*
73. Arizona State
74. Old Dominion*
75. Toledo†
76. Wisconsin†
77. DePaul†
78. Ohio State†
79. Louisville†
80. St. Bonaventure†
81. South Florida†
82. Southern Miss
83. Idaho*
84. Kansas State
85. Virginia Tech
86. Delaware*
87. Marquette
88. Rutgers†
89. Illinois State†

90. Hawaii
91. Marshall†
92. Long Beach State†
93. Pepperdine†
94. Murray State*
95. Siena†
96. UT-Chattanooga
97. Illinois
98. Illinois-Chicago
99. Northern Arizona*
100. Florida State
101. Vanderbilt
102. UNC Charlotte
103. Ball State
104. James Madison
105. Alabama
106. Colorado
107. Wisconsin-Green Bay
108. Northern Illinois
109. Rider
110. Tennessee Tech
111. West Virginia
112. New Mexico State
113. Drexel
114. Tennessee State
115. Seton Hall
116. Florida International
117. Montana State
118. Wyoming
119. Wichita State
120. Virginia
121. UNC Wilmington

122. Boston U.
123. Georgia State*
124. Santa Clara
125. Louisiana Tech
126. St. Francis (N.Y.)*
127. Furman
128. Appalachian State
129. Ohio
130. Niagara
131. Kent
132. Washington State
133. Penn
134. Northwestern
135. Providence
136. Michigan
137. Hofstra
138. Butler
139. Oregon State
140. La Salle
141. Colorado State
142. Bradley
143. Loyola (Ill.)
144. George Mason
145. LSU
146. St. Joseph's
147. Oral Roberts*
148. Evansville
149. Loyola (Md.)
150. Boise State
151. Portland State
152. San Francisco
153. Austin Peay



**Valparaiso's
Zoran Viskovic**

ED NISSEN / TSN

- 154. Cal Poly
- 155. Middle Tennessee State
- 156. Weber State
- 157. Fairleigh Dickinson
- 158. Samford
- 159. Coppin State*
- 160. Fordham
- 161. Bowling Green
- 162. Cleveland State
- 163. Duquesne
- 164. Vermont
- 165. Indiana State
- 166. Notre Dame
- 167. Texas A&M
- 168. BYU
- 169. Boston College
- 170. Wright State
- 171. Marist
- 172. Utah State

- 173. Southwest Texas State*
- 174. Maine
- 175. Canisius
- 176. Navy*
- 177. Houston
- 178. Western Michigan
- 179. American
- 180. Baylor
- 181. Portland
- 182. Mount St. Mary's
- 183. Richmond
- 184. Tulane
- 185. Texas-El Paso
- 186. UNC Asheville*
- 187. SE Missouri State
- 188. Cal State Fullerton
- 189. SW Louisiana
- 190. Youngstown State
- 191. Central Florida

- 192. Long Island U.
- 193. Valparaiso
- 194. Lamar
- 195. Cal State Northridge
- 196. Texas Southern*
- 197. UNC Greensboro
- 198. Rice
- 199. William & Mary
- 200. South Alabama
- 201. Hartford
- 202. North Texas
- 203. San Diego State
- 204. Arkansas-Little Rock
- 205. Southern
- 206. Eastern Washington
- 207. Southern Illinois
- 208. Western Illinois
- 209. Manhattan
- 210. Wagner
- 211. Texas-San Antonio
- 212. Jacksonville
- 213. Montana
- 214. Wofford
- 215. Central Michigan
- 216. East Carolina
- 217. Northeastern
- 218. Eastern Michigan
- 219. Pacific
- 220. Centenary
- 221. NE Louisiana
- 222. Fairfield
- 223. Virginia Commonwealth
- 224. VMI
- 225. Radford
- 226. Eastern Kentucky
- 227. East Tennessee State
- 228. San Diego
- 229. Lafayette
- 230. Eastern Illinois
- 231. Georgia Southern
- 232. Missouri-Kansas City
- 233. Central Connecticut
- 234. Hampton
- 235. Charleston Southern
- 236. Southern Utah
- 237. Maryland-Baltimore Co.
- 238. Nicholls State
- 239. Columbia
- 240. Grambling
- 241. Bucknell
- 242. Western Kentucky
- 243. San Jose State
- 244. UT-Martin
- 245. New Orleans
- 246. Air Force
- 247. Nevada
- 248. Stephen F. Austin
- 249. Morgan State
- 250. New Hampshire
- 251. Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- 252. Drake
- 253. Stetson

- 254. Robert Morris
- 255. Jackson State
- 256. Northern Iowa
- 257. Coastal Carolina
- 258. Tennessee Tech
- 259. Alabama State
- 260. St. Peter's
- 261. UC Irvine
- 262. Western Carolina
- 263. Monmouth
- 264. Texas-Arlington
- 265. Alcorn State
- 266. South Carolina State
- 267. Liberty
- 268. Buffalo
- 269. Florida Atlantic
- 270. Loyola Marymount
- 271. Cornell
- 272. Mercer
- 273. McNeese State
- 274. North Carolina A&T
- 275. Belmont
- 276. Holy Cross
- 277. Winthrop
- 278. Northwestern State (La.)
- 279. Towson
- 280. UC Santa Barbara
- 281. The Citadel
- 282. Florida A&M
- 283. Morehead State
- 284. Norfolk State
- 285. St. Francis (Pa.)
- 286. Harvard
- 287. IUPUI
- 288. Lehigh
- 289. Mississippi Valley State
- 290. Delaware State
- 291. Yale
- 292. Troy State
- 293. SE Louisiana
- 294. Howard
- 295. Sacramento State
- 296. Campbell
- 297. Dartmouth
- 298. Colgate
- 299. Idaho State
- 300. Sam Houston State
- 301. Prairie View
- 302. Jacksonville State
- 303. Alabama A&M
- 304. Maryland-Eastern Shore
- 305. Texas-Pan American
- 306. Army
- 307. Elon
- 308. Brown
- 309. Arkansas-Pine Bluff
- 310. Bethune-Cookman
- 311. High Point
- 312. Chicago State
- 313. Oakland (Mich.)
- 314. Quinnipiac

Player of the Year

BY MIKE DECOURCY

Because he is a coach and cannot help himself, Michigan State's Tom Izzo still suggests little ways Mateen Cleaves can improve as a point guard. Mostly, they are things Cleaves thought of first. This does not make Cleaves tough to coach; instead, it shows that coaching can be redundant from time to time. "He's able to take criticism and he's able to blame himself, and few guys are able to do that," Izzo says. "If I had to pick something that I like about him most, it might be that—over his game."

His game is sweet enough, and easy enough, to quantify: 16.1 points and 7.1 assists per game as a sophomore last season, when he guided the Spartans to 22 victories. Michigan State was expected to land in the middle of the Big Ten pack but instead tied for the league title (its first since 1990) and advanced to the Sweet 16, where the Spartans fell to North Carolina. Cleaves' well-rounded game is a big reason THE SPORTING NEWS has selected him as preseason player of the year. Cleaves is as strong as any point guard college basketball has seen in recent years, and he uses that muscle to his advantage on offense and defense.

He also has a gift for self-analysis. The acknowledgment of failure is not a common trait among 1990s athletes, but Cleaves got an overdose during his freshman season. He spent the months leading up to his start at Michigan State in a body cast because of a severe back ailment. When the season began, he would try to overpower an opponent, but could not conjure the strength. He would try to explode into the lane, only to fizzle. "I heard it all," Cleaves says. "Guys would say, 'I thought you were better than this.' I had the All-American honors by my name, and I was supposed to be the savior of Michigan State. And I couldn't do anything. It was tough. I felt like hanging up the shoes, to tell the truth."

The injury taught him to be smarter, to learn the shortcuts players without his physical skills must rely on to compete. The experience convinced him college basketball was something to be conquered, not inherited.

In a basketball culture that provides elite players myriad opportunities to play the game rather than work at it, Cleaves turned down opportunities to play overseas in order to work in the gym in the summer of '97, shooting 500 jumpers a day and drilling to improve his ballhandling. He lost nearly 25 pounds in the process.

This past offseason, Cleaves passed on a chance to try out for the Goodwill Games team in order to follow the same routine, although he could not resist an invitation to try out for the U.S. team in the World Championships after the NBA lockout led to players being dropped from the roster. He made the team (he was the only college player) but missed the tourney with an injury.

His one goal was to return to Michigan State as an improved player. He shot only 40 percent from the field (34 percent from 3-point range) last season and has to do better as a junior, especially from spot-up situations and on pull-ups in the lane. The Spartans will need as much as he can give them. With five returning starters and only one player missing from last season's rotation, they will be expected to contend for a Final Four berth.

"It's easy to sneak up on people. It's not as hard as when everybody's shooting at you," Cleaves says. "I'm one of those guys that's never satisfied. Once you get satisfied with yourself, think you don't need to be learning anymore, that's when you start falling off."

TSN

Mike DeCourcy covers college basketball for the Cincinnati Enquirer and writes a weekly column for THE SPORTING NEWS.



Michigan State's Mateen Cleaves uses his head as much as his talent

POINT GUARDS

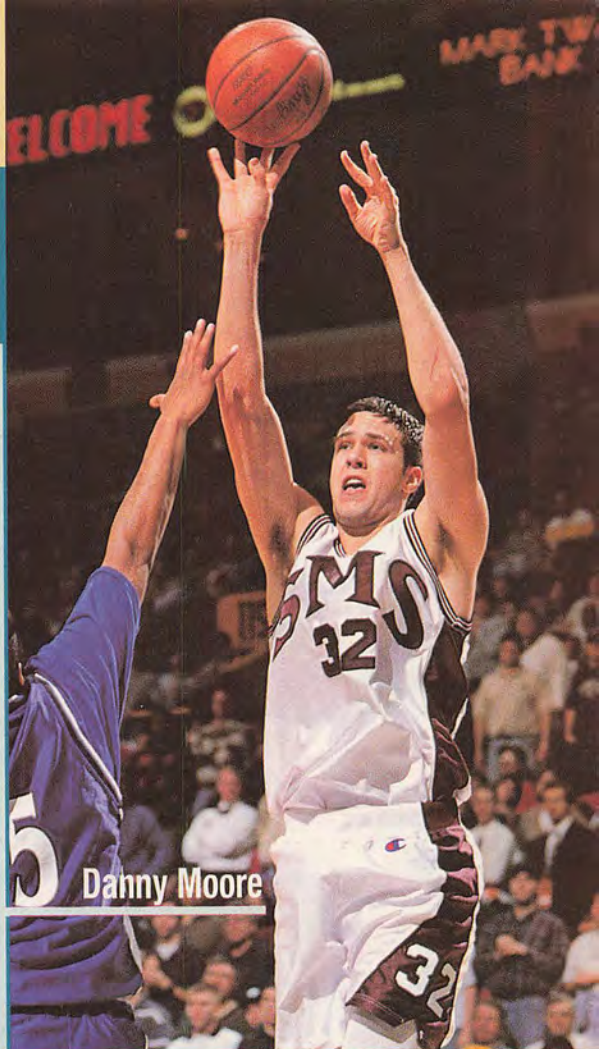
Rank/Player	Cl.	Ht./Wt.	FG%	FT%	3PT%	APG	PPG
1. Mateen Cleaves, Michigan State	Jr.	6-2/195	40.0	70.3	33.6	7.2	16.1
2. Andre Miller, Utah	Sr.	6-2/205	54.9	72.2	33.3	5.2	14.2
3. Khalid El-Amin, Connecticut	Soph.	5-10/200	42.4	79.6	36.5	4.2	16.0
4. Arthur Lee, Stanford	Sr.	6-0/170	42.8	88.7	44.3	4.6	14.5
5. Baron Davis, UCLA	Soph.	6-2/190	52.9	67.6	30.8	5.0	11.7
6. Tony Harris, Tennessee	Soph.	6-0/165	36.6	72.0	32.2	4.2	14.2
7. Ed Cota, North Carolina	Jr.	6-1/185	49.3	82.4	30.3	7.4	8.1
8. Vonteego Cummings, Pittsburgh	Sr.	6-5/190	42.6	69.4	31.5	5.9	19.5
9. Shaheen Holloway, Seton Hall	Jr.	5-10/175	34.4	62.9	24.2	6.5	15.0
10. Terrell McIntyre, Clemson	Sr.	5-9/175	42.7	77.9	36.1	5.3	13.9
11. Robert O'Kelley, Wake Forest	Soph.	6-1/185	41.7	80.6	42.1	1.8	16.6
12. A.J. Guyton, Indiana	Jr.	6-1/175	46.8	76.6	43.9	3.7	16.8
13. Jason Terry, Arizona	Sr.	6-2/169	42.2	82.7	34.7	4.3	10.6
14. Scoonie Penn, Ohio State	Jr.	5-10/175	*40.2	77.7	33.1	3.1	13.1
15. Chris Herren, Fresno State	Sr.	6-3/185	46.7	56.4	36.2	4.8	15.6
16. Lonnie Cooper, Louisiana Tech	Sr.	6-5/186	39.7	80.3	38.4	5.1	17.0
17. Craig Claxton, Hofstra	Jr.	5-10/165	48.5	73.0	18.2	7.2	16.3
18. Brian Williams, Alabama	Sr.	6-1/193	35.9	81.5	34.3	2.5	16.1
19. Ryan Robertson, Kansas	Sr.	6-5/182	45.4	73.3	43.1	6.4	8.3
20. Wayne Turner, Kentucky	Sr.	6-2/187	48.1	62.0	36.8	4.4	9.3

*—Stats from 1996-97 season, when Penn was at Boston College.

PLAYER RANKINGS

CENTERS

Rank/Player	Cl.	Ht./Wt.	FG%	FT%	RPG	BPG	PPG
1. Elton Brand, Duke	Soph.	6-8/260	59.2	60.4	7.3	1.3	13.4
2. Evan Eschmeyer, Northwestern	Sr.	6-11/244	61.0	61.3	10.7	.89	21.7
3. Kenny Thomas, New Mexico	Sr.	6-8/255	50.6	76.7	9.3	2.5	16.8
4. Etan Thomas, Syracuse	Jr.	6-9/231	61.0	61.2	6.6	3.9	11.3
5. Todd MacCulloch, Washington	Sr.	7-0/280	65.0	70.4	9.7	1.3	18.6
6. Obinna Ekezie, Maryland	Sr.	6-10/262	48.4	67.0	6.5	1.2	12.8
7. Kenyon Martin, Cincinnati	Jr.	6-8/230	62.6	47.6	8.9	2.7	9.9
8. A.J. Bramlett, Arizona	Sr.	6-11/217	51.4	57.0	7.4	1.0	10.4
9. Chris Mihm, Texas	Soph.	7-0/255	51.4	64.7	8.0	2.9	12.4
10. Lari Ketner, Massachusetts	Sr.	6-10/268	52.3	64.4	7.4	2.1	15.2
11. Tim Young, Stanford	Sr.	7-1/245	51.4	76.3	8.1	1.2	11.3
12. Bud Eley, Southeast Missouri St.	Sr.	6-10/260	51.3	66.2	6.8	1.4	15.0
13. Kaspars Kambala, UNLV	Soph.	6-9/250	52.1	72.1	7.4	0.6	11.6
14. Alvin Jones, Georgia Tech	Soph.	6-11/257	49.7	55.7	6.7	4.3	6.8
15. Tyrone Washington, Mississippi St.	Sr.	6-10/260	53.1	60.3	9.3	2.1	12.9
16. Jamaal Magloire, Kentucky	Jr.	6-10/260	48.7	67.2	4.2	1.7	5.2
17. Danny Moore, SW Missouri State	Sr.	6-10/243	53.1	83.6	6.0	1.0	15.7
18. Kashif Hameed, Iona	Sr.	6-8/230	48.9	73.5	6.2	2.5	15.3
19. Jake Voskuhl, Connecticut	Jr.	6-11/240	56.5	67.5	7.1	1.3	6.9
20. Guy Rucker, Iowa	Jr.	6-9/235	48.9	66.7	3.3	0.6	6.6

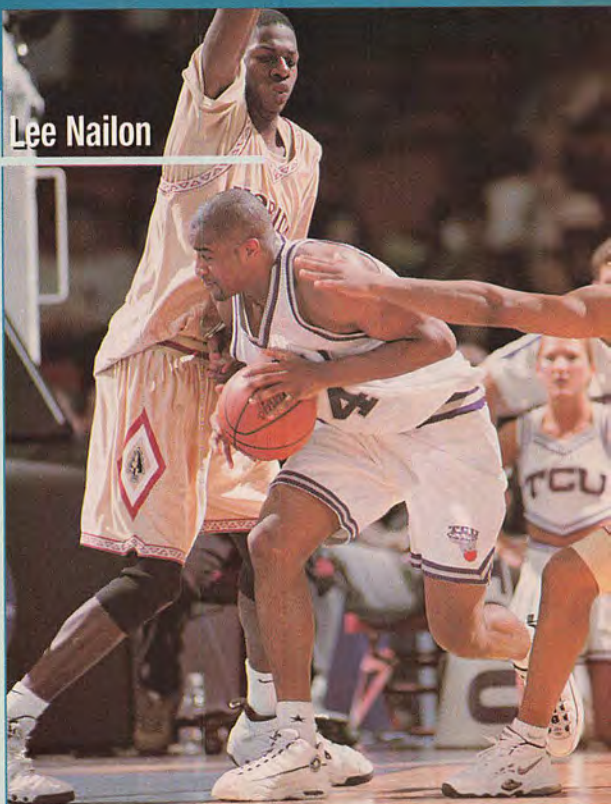


Danny Moore

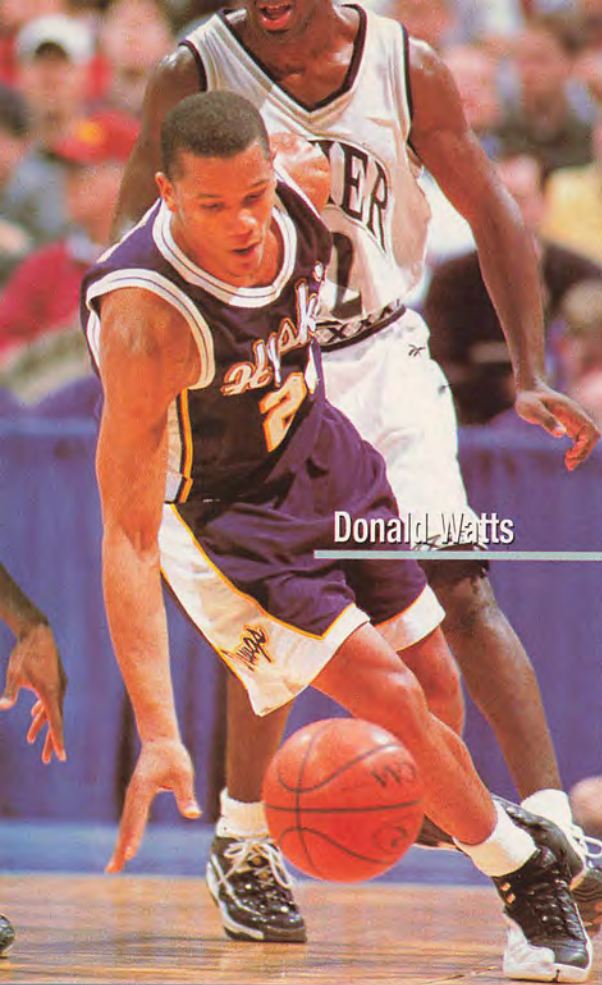
POWER FORWARDS

Rank/Player	Cl.	Ht./Wt.	FG%	FT%	RPG	BPG	PPG
1. Lee Nailon, TCU	Sr.	6-9/235	55.4	74.5	8.9	1.0	24.9
2. James Posey, Xavier	Sr.	6-8/210	55.6	82.4	8.4	0.5	15.3
3. Omar Sneed, Memphis	Sr.	6-6/239	58.5	66.7	9.2	0.4	20.9
4. Marcus Fizer, Iowa State	Soph.	6-8/240	47.4	61.6	6.7	0.9	14.9
5. Tim James, Miami (Fla.)	Sr.	6-7/221	48.5	67.4	9.4	1.6	16.8
6. Mark Madsen, Stanford	Jr.	6-8/235	58.9	62.9	8.2	0.4	11.7
7. Isaac Hawkins, Pittsburgh	Jr.	6-8/210	54.1	68.4	9.2	1.7	14.2
8. Shane Battier, Duke	Soph.	6-8/215	53.9	73.1	6.4	1.5	7.6
9. Scott Padgett, Kentucky	Sr.	6-9/240	47.6	85.3	6.5	0.7	11.5
10. C.J. Black, Tennessee	Jr.	6-8/250	51.9	74.1	6.8	2.5	12.6
11. Damion Walker, New Mexico	Jr.	6-7/225	*41.7	75.9	6.5	1.1	12.2
12. Manny Dies, Kansas State	Sr.	6-9/230	54.7	69.1	7.6	1.9	15.7
13. Ryan Humphrey, Oklahoma	Soph.	6-8/225	48.2	54.9	6.5	1.8	9.2
14. Brian Cardinal, Purdue	Jr.	6-8/235	50.9	78.7	4.9	0.3	12.0
15. Lamont Barnes, Temple	Jr.	6-10/230	57.9	66.0	8.0	2.5	13.8
16. T.J. Lux, Northern Illinois	Sr.	6-9/220	46.4	73.1	11.1	1.4	18.6
17. Rolan Roberts, Virginia Tech	Soph.	6-6/242	53.4	57.8	6.4	2.2	13.6
18. Antonio Reynolds-Dean, Rhode Island	Sr.	6-7/220	50.5	67.7	7.6	2.5	11.2
19. Jason Collier, Georgia Tech	Jr.	7-0/245	*43.4	68.4	5.7	1.0	9.4
20. Michael Ruffin, Tulsa	Sr.	6-8/235	50.2	67.5	9.5	2.5	10.4

*—Stats from 1996-97 season, when Walker was at TCU and Collier at Indiana.



Lee Nailon



Donald Watts

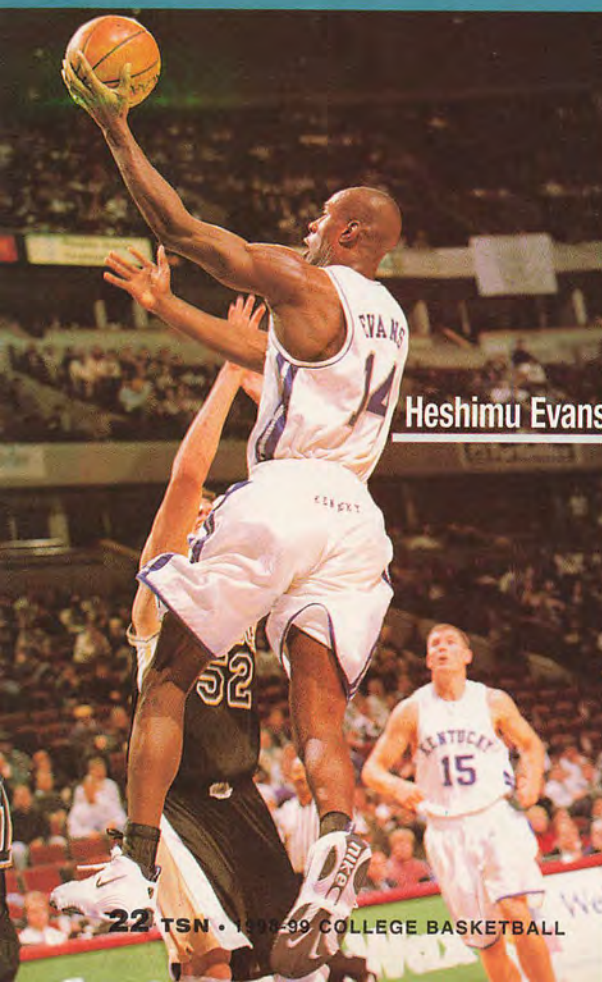
PLAYER RANKINGS

SHOOTING GUARDS

Rank/Player	Cl.	Ht./Wt.	FG%	FT%	3PT%	APG	PPG
1. Richard Hamilton, Connecticut	Jr.	6-6/185	44.0	84.3	40.4	2.4	21.5
2. BJ McKie, South Carolina	Sr.	6-2/190	43.8	78.2	41.5	3.0	18.8
3. Michael Redd, Ohio State	Soph.	6-5/193	43.8	61.6	30.3	3.0	21.9
4. Dion Glover, Georgia Tech	Soph.	6-5/235	44.1	64.0	27.1	2.6	18.4
5. Trajan Langdon, Duke	Sr.	6-3/200	44.4	88.6	39.5	1.9	14.7
6. Adrian Peterson, Oklahoma State	Sr.	6-4/197	46.2	79.9	32.8	1.7	17.7
7. Lamont Long, New Mexico	Jr.	6-4/190	46.1	76.7	31.8	2.7	14.1
8. Donald Watts, Washington	Sr.	6-4/200	47.6	71.4	30.8	3.6	16.9
9. Louis Bullock, Michigan	Sr.	6-3/180	44.3	91.1	44.9	2.9	17.1
10. Jaraan Cornell, Purdue	Jr.	6-3/200	51.9	81.3	50.0	2.3	12.8
11. Damon Frierson, Miami (Ohio)	Sr.	6-4/195	39.8	76.9	33.9	4.1	18.8
12. Brandon Wharton, Tennessee	Sr.	6-3/190	39.2	72.4	42.9	3.0	15.2
13. Neil Reed, Southern Miss	Sr.	6-2/190	*41.5	85.4	40.4	2.2	12.6
14. Geno Carlisle, California	Sr.	6-3/200	43.3	75.2	34.2	2.3	17.9
15. Melvin Levett, Cincinnati	Sr.	6-3/215	41.7	75.0	37.8	1.4	14.1
16. Pat Bradley, Arkansas	Sr.	6-2/195	38.2	90.2	38.4	1.7	14.8
17. Jeryl Sasser, SMU	Soph.	6-6/200	39.0	71.8	26.2	3.7	15.0
18. Kevin Clark, Minnesota	Sr.	6-2/180	48.8	76.1	40.0	2.6	11.6
19. Quentin Richardson, DePaul	Fr.	6-6/215	—	—	—	—	—
20. Jermaine Jackson, Detroit	Sr.	6-4/208	45.1	70.1	32.0	4.8	12.1

*—Stats from 1996-97 season, when Reed was at Indiana.

BOB LEVINE/TSN



Heshimu Evans

SMALL FORWARDS

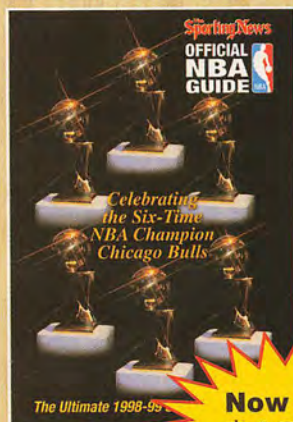
Rank/Player	Cl.	Ht./Wt.	FG%	FT%	3PT%	RPG	PPG
1. Wally Szczerbiak, Miami (Ohio)	Sr.	6-8/241	52.9	80.6	49.2	7.6	24.4
2. Jumaine Jones, Georgia	Soph.	6-7/210	45.3	78.5	35.5	8.5	14.7
3. Laron Profit, Maryland	Sr.	6-5/202	44.7	70.7	29.1	5.2	15.8
4. Lamar Odom, Rhode Island	Soph.	6-10/220	—	—	—	—	—
5. Ron Artest, St. John's	Soph.	6-6/233	41.5	52.6	32.7	6.3	11.6
6. Shawn Marion, UNLV	Jr.	6-7/215	*60.3	74.8	37.0	13.1	23.5
7. Hanno Mottola, Utah	Jr.	6-10/230	48.9	75.4	29.1	5.3	12.5
8. Rodney Buford, Creighton	Sr.	6-5/195	42.4	71.7	32.7	7.3	18.9
9. Heshimu Evans, Kentucky	Sr.	6-6/210	44.4	70.3	37.6	4.0	13.7
10. Jason Capel, North Carolina	Fr.	6-8/218	—	—	—	—	—
11. Luke Recker, Indiana	Soph.	6-6/190	49.8	78.1	36.2	3.9	12.8
12. Quincy Lewis, Minnesota	Sr.	6-7/215	45.7	67.8	29.9	5.6	14.5
13. Chris Carrawell, Duke	Jr.	6-6/215	48.2	64.1	36.8	3.7	10.1
14. Kris Clack, Texas	Sr.	6-5/225	45.4	72.9	32.7	6.5	17.3
15. Kenny Inge, NC State	Soph.	6-8/211	51.6	67.6	11.1	7.4	11.0
16. Jamel Thomas, Providence	Sr.	6-6/215	35.8	78.0	30.3	6.9	18.5
17. Albert White, Missouri	Jr.	6-5/238	40.3	71.1	34.0	4.9	10.9
18. Byron Mouton, Tulane	Soph.	6-6/215	36.0	75.9	29.6	3.9	15.3
19. Yegor Mescheriakov, G. Washington	Sr.	6-8/235	41.8	75.2	35.8	4.8	12.7
20. Richie Parker, Long Island U.	Jr.	6-5/200	50.8	42.1	21.7	7.3	15.9

*—Stats from 1997-98, when Marion was at Vincennes (Ind.) University.

ED NESSEN/TSN

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The Sporting News

Unit **RANKINGS**

(Projected starters in bold)

1. DUKE (Shane Battier, Elton Brand, Chris Burgess, **Chris Carrawell**, Matt Christensen, Taymon Domzalski, Nate James, Corey Maggette). An embarrassment of riches, as there is unbelievable talent in Durham. No one should outrebound the Blue Devils. Carrawell and James need to consistently hit jumpers, and Maggette should be an effective slasher.

2. STANFORD (Jarron Collins, Jason Collins, **Mark Madsen**, Ryan Mendez, David Moseley, **Peter Sauer**, Mark Seaton, **Tim Young**). You want big bruisers? The Cardinal have 'em. Madsen is hustle personified. Stanford outrebounded foes by an astounding 9.4 last season; expect more of the same this season. The Collins twins add a dose of athleticism. Moseley and Mendez are swingman-types who can shoot. And if Young ever played to his abilities

3. KENTUCKY (Desmond Allison, Myron Anthony, Michael Bradley, Jules Camara, **Heshimu Evans**, **Jamaal Magloire**, **Scott Padgett**, Tayshaun Prince). Padgett (power forward) and Evans (small forward) will be among the nation's best at their



Brand may be the best center in the nation and is a force down low.

BRIAN SPURLOCK

Frontcourt

respective positions, and Magloire could be a horse. Expect Bradley to be an important player off the bench. Freshmen Camara and Prince (who'll also play off-guard) could be important contributors.

4. MARYLAND (Lonnie Baxter, LaRon Cephas, **Obinna Ekezie**, Mike Mardesich, **Terence Morris**, **Laron Profit**, Brian Watkins). Ekezie is a load down low, but he needs to improve his work on the boards. Morris is a star in the making. Profit is one of the best players in the country—when he wants to be. Mardesich is effective off the bench.

5. CINCINNATI (Ryan Fletcher, Eugene Land, **Kenyon Martin**, Aaron McGhee, **Pete Mickeal**, Jermaine Tate). Much depends on Mickeal, a hyped JC transfer. Martin is a force in the middle; expect him to become a bit more offensive-minded. Tate, an Ohio State transfer, and Land, a freshman, are newcomers who should see time.

6. ARIZONA (Rick Anderson, **A.J. Bramlett**, Eugene Edgerson, Donnell Harris, **Richard Jefferson**, Luke Walton, Justin Wessel, **Michael Wright**). Two talented freshmen—Jefferson and Wright—could be the starting forwards. Expect more offense from Bramlett. Edgerson is a rebounding machine. If Harris comes back strong from medical woes, this unit will be a handful.

7. UCLA (Matt Barnes, **Dan Gadzuric**, Billy Knight, **Jerome Moiso**, Travis Reed, **JaRon Rush**). This group is scary. It's scary because the potential is unlimited. It's also scary in that all three starters could be true freshmen. Gadzuric could be a monster. Rush could be a super scorer. Moiso and Reed could do the grunt work. Knight and Barnes could shoot lights out. On the other hand

8. SYRACUSE (Ryan Blackwell, Damone Brown, Billy Celuck, Kueth Duany, Elvir Ovcina, **Etan Thomas**, **Eric Williams**). Blackwell and Thomas are an effective tandem, with Thomas emerging as one of the best centers in the

nation. Ovcina is a good spot-up shooter off the bench. The onus is on Williams to produce good numbers; he won't put up the numbers departed small forward Todd Burgan did, but Williams needs to average around 10 points and five boards for the Orangemen to reach their potential.

9. TENNESSEE (C.J. Black, Torrey Harris, **Charles Hathaway**, Rashard Lee, Isiah Victor, **Vincent Yarbrough**). This could end up being the best group in the SEC. Hathaway, Black, Harris and Victor form an effective power quartet, and Yarbrough and Lee could be an excellent small forward duo. The success of Yarbrough, a touted freshman, ultimately may determine how far the Vols advance in the NCAA tourney.

10. NC STATE (Keith Bean, **Kenny Inge**, **Ron Kelley**, **Damon Thornton**, Tim Wells, Cornelius Williams). Potential galore. If Thornton can stay healthy, this could be the second-best unit in the ACC. Inge will make the move to small forward; will he be quick enough? Kelley and Williams are physical presences under the boards. Bean, a freshman, comes highly touted.

Ten other formidable frontcourts

CONNECTICUT (Beau Archibald, Justin Brown, **Kevin Freeman**, Rashamel Jones, Antric Klaiber, Edmund Saunders, **Jake Voskuhl**, Souleymane Wane); **MASSACHUSETTS** (**Mike Babul**, **Ajmal Basit**, Ronell Blizard, **Lari Ketner**, Chris Kirkland, Anthony Oates, Kitwana Rhymer, Winston Smith); **MEMPHIS** (James Harris, Shamel Jones, **Paris London**, **Jermaine Ousley**, **Omar Sneed**, Kelly Wise); **MICHIGAN STATE** (Adam Ballinger, A.J. Granger, **Andre Hutson**, **Jason Klein**, Morris Peterson, **Antonio Smith**, David Thomas); **NEW MEXICO** (Greg Davis, Drew Gaulden, **Roland Hannah**, Bernard McIntosh, Brian Smith, **Kenny Thomas**, **Damion Walker**); **RHODE ISLAND** (David Arigbabu, Tavorris Bell, Leon Brisport, Ed Brown, **Luther Clay**, Tory Jefferson, **Lamar Odom**, **Antonio Reynolds-Dean**); **TEMPLE** (Lamont Barnes, **Mark Karcher**, **Kevin Lyde**, Ronald Rollerson, Keaton Sanders, Alex Wesby); **TULSA** (Robert Bell, **Zac Bennett**, **Eric Coley**, John Cornwell, Kevin Johnson, Brandon Kurtz, DeAngelo McDaniel, **Michael Ruffin**, Jay Spurlock); **UNLV** (Issiah Epps, **Kaspars Kambala**, **Shawn Marion**, Chris Richardson, **Kevin Simmons**, Donovan Stewart); **WASHINGTON** (Greg Clark, **Thalo Green**, Grant Leep, **Todd MacCulloch**, Marlon Shelton, Chris Walcott).

Eight underrated frontcourts

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON (Carlos Brown, Kevin Glover, **Jody Lumpkin**, **Carl Thomas**, **Sedric Webber**); **GEORGIA TECH** (Jon Babul, **Jason Collier**, Jason Floyd, **Alvin Jones**, Pablo Machado); **IONA** (Jamal Dunmore, Phil Grant, **Kashif Hameed**, **Tariq Kirksay**, Ivo Kresta, **Nakiea Miller**, Ned Rolsma); **MARQUETTE** (**Mike Bargin**, Greg Clausen, **Jon Harris**, **Jarrod Lovette**, John Mueller, Oluoma Nnamaka, John Polonowski); **MIAMI OF OHIO** (Rich Allendorf, **Mike Ensminger**, **John Estick**, Refiloe Lethunya, Jay Locklier, **Wally Szczerbiak**); **MINNESOTA** (Antoine Broxsie, **Quincy Lewis**, Kevin Nathaniel, **Joel Przybilla**, Dusty Rychart, **Kyle Sanden**, Nick Sinville, Miles Tarver); **NEBRASKA** (Larry Florence, **Venson Hamilton**, Brant Harriman, Chad Johnson, **Andy Markowski**, Troy Platkowski, Louis Truscott); **OKLAHOMA** (**Victor Avila**, **Ryan Humphrey**, Nolan Johnson, Eric Martin, **Eduardo Najera**, Olag Reztsov, Renzi Stone).

TSN

Rankings by TSN editors and Mike DeCourcy. Text by Mike Huguenin.

(Projected starters in bold)

1. Connecticut (Beau Archibald, **Khalid El-Amin**, **Richard Hamilton**, Rashamel Jones, **Ricky Moore**, Albert Mouring). The Huskies have the best off-guard in the nation in Richard Hamilton (who's actually a swingman) and one of the top point guards in El-Amin. Plus, they have Moore, who is solid defensively and a good passer; Jones, another swingman; and Archibald, a former Washington State player by way of a JC who can shoot. Oh, yeah, there's also the seldom-used Mouring, who was a high school All-American.

2. Tennessee (Del Baker, Vegas Davis, Aaron Green, **Tony Harris**, **Brandon Wharton**). This is an athletic group, and the starting duo is excellent. Harris has a chance to be one of the best point guards in the nation if he improves his decision-making. Wharton has good range, and off the bench, Davis can sky. But depth is average.

3. Michigan State (**Charlie Bell**, **Mateen Cleaves**, Doug Davis, Lorenzo Guess, Thomas Kelley, Brandon Smith, David Thomas). Cleaves is the best point guard in the nation, and Bell played steadily as a freshman last season. That sterling duo will get help from Kelley, who missed last season with an injury. Thomas and Davis are role players.

4. UCLA (Ryan Bailey, **Baron Davis**, Rico Hines, Billy Knight, Brandon Loyd, **Earl Watson**, Ray Young). Talent galore. Davis is one of the best point guards in the nation, but he's coming off a knee injury. Watson is a steady partner. Young, a touted freshman, easily could slide into a starting role. And speaking of role, there are some good role players, too. The Bruins' backcourt will be fine; if the frontcourt meshes, UCLA could win it all.

5. Memphis (Shyrone Chatman, Dinno Daniels, **Detric Golden**, **Jimmie Hunter**, Marcus Moody, Aaron Mulvagh, Keiron Shine). This ranking is based solely on the assumption that Golden and Hunter get their academics in order; both will miss the first semester (look for Shine and Moody to start in their stead). If Golden and Hunter return, Memphis immediately becomes one of the two best teams in C-USA. Hunter, especially, could be a star.

6. Ohio State (Brian Brown, Neshawn Coleman, **Scoonie Penn**, **Michael Redd**, Jon Sanderson, Jason Singleton, Boban Savovic). Redd was a scoring machine as a freshman last season. Penn was one of the best point men in the nation before transferring from Boston College. Singleton and Sanderson are swingman-types who could start at forward. Coleman is a steady role player, and Brown and Savovic are freshmen who will get chances to contribute.

7. Stanford (Tony Giovacchini, **Arthur Lee**, Kyle Logan, Michael McDonald, Ryan Mendez, David Moseley, **Kris Weems**). The Cardinal have solid starters and depth. Lee may be the best player in the Pac-10; he's a great shooter and a great passer. Weems is a solid contributor. McDonald should have a bigger role this season. Moseley and Mendez are swingmen who have great range.

8. Indiana (Dane Fife, **A.J. Guyton**, Kyle Hornsby, Luke Jimenez, Michael Lewis, Antwaan Randle El, **Luke Recker**, Rob Turner). Boy, would this group be great in a run-and-gun attack. But therein lies the question: Will Bob Knight turn these guys loose? Guyton can motor and is a good shooter. Fife is a touted freshman. Recker is listed as a small forward, but he can play off-guard, too; he can fly with the best of 'em. Turner and Lewis can do good things off the bench.

9. Oklahoma State (Joe Adkins, **Glendon Alexander**, Doug Gottlieb, **Adrian Peterson**). Peterson is one of the most underrated players in the



Weems is a part of a stacked Stanford group. His outside shot is a key offensive component.

nation; he is an athletic slasher who plays defense and can shoot. Gottlieb is a heady point man, but he isn't much of an offensive threat. Alexander, a transfer from Arkansas, is an athletic swingman who'll help the Cowboys become even better defenders. Adkins is solid and can get hot from the outside; he could start again if coach Eddie Sutton wants Alexander to come off the bench.

10. Duke (**William Avery**, Jay Heaps, **Trajan Langdon**, J.D. Simpson). The starters are Cadillacs, the reserves Corvairs. Simply, the good health of Avery and Langdon is paramount to Duke's success. Look for some small forwards—Nate James, Chris Carrarwell and Corey Maggette—occasionally to swing to the backcourt.

Ten other

Backcourt

formidable backcourts

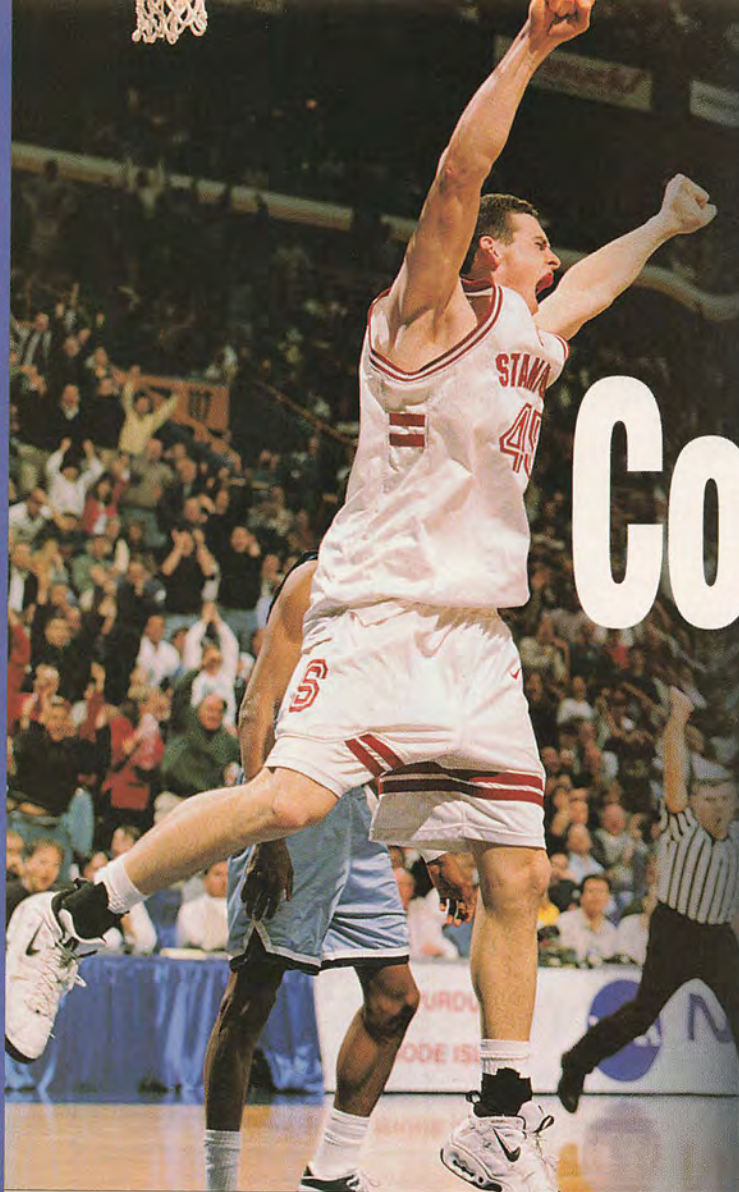
ARKANSAS (Pat Bradley, Brandon Davis, Brandon Dean, Jason Gilbert, **Kareem Reid**, Josh Smith, Chris Walker); **CALIFORNIA** (Carl Boyd, **Geno Carlisle**, Dennis Gates, Robbie Jones, **Thomas Kilgore**, Ray "Circus" King, Donte Smith); **FRESNO STATE** (**Courtney Alexander**, Travis DeManby, Willie Farley, **Chris Herren**, Nick Irvin, Damon Jackson, Demetrius Porter, Shomario Richard); **NORTH CAROLINA** (Michael Brooker, **Ed Cota**, **Ronald Curry**, Terrence Newby, Max Owens); **PITTSBURGH** (**Vonteego Cummings**, **Ricardo Greer**, Jeremy Holmes, **Jarrett Lockhart**, Fred Primus, Kellii Taylor); **PURDUE** (Jaraan Cornell, Carson Cunningham, **Alan Eldridge**, Maynard Lewis, Tony Mayfield); **SMU** (Anthony Anderson, Renaldo Bratton, **Willie Davis**, Chad Elsey, Damon Hancock, **Jeryl Sasser**, **Stephen Woods**); **TEMPLE** (**Rasheed Brokenborough**, Lynn Greer, **Pepe Sanchez**, Quincy Wadley); **XAVIER** (Alvin Brown, **Lenny Brown**, Gary Lumpkin, Maurice McAfee, **Lloyd Price**); **WASHINGTON** (Senque Carey, Dan Dickau, Michael Johnson, **Deon Luton**, **Donald Watts**).

Eight underrated backcourts

AKRON (Jimmal Ball, Adam Benton, **Jami Bosley**, Cornell Felton, Nate Schindewolf); **COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON** (Jeff Bolton, Danny Johnson, **Shane McCravy**, **Jermel President**); **GONZAGA** (Ryan Floyd, **Richie Frahm**, Quentin Hall, Mike Nilson, **Matt Santangelo**); **KANSAS** (Jeff Boschee, Nick Bradford, John Crider, **Kenny Gregory**, Marlon London, **Ryan Robertson**); **MAINE** (Andy Bedard, Clinton Dye, **Dade Faison**, **Fred Meeks**, Corey Thibodeau, Rickey White, **Marcus Wills**); **MICHIGAN** (Louis Bullock, Leon Jones, Ron Oliver, **Robbie Reid**); **SETON HALL** (Shaheen Holloway, John Johnson, Rimas Kaukenas, Darius Lane, Chuck Moore, **Gary Saunders**, Ty Shine); **WICHITA STATE** (Terrell Benton, **Maurice Evans**, Carl Lemons, Jay Lewis, **Jason Perez**).

TSN

Rankings by TSN editors and Mike DeCourcy. Text by Mike Huguenin.



Conference rankings rankings rankings



1. Pacific-10	16. Big West
2. ACC	17. America East
3. SEC	18. Ohio Valley
4. Atlantic 10	19. Southern
5. Big Ten	20. Sun Belt
6. Conference USA	21. Big Sky
7. Big 12	22. Mid-Continent
8. Big East	23. Northeast
9. Western Athletic	24. Trans America Athletic
10. Missouri Valley	25. Ivy
11. Mid-American	26. Southwestern Athletic
12. West Coast	27. Southland
13. Midwestern Collegiate	28. Mid-Eastern Athletic
14. Metro Atlantic Athletic	29. Big South
15. Colonial Athletic	30. Patriot

Yes, you're reading this correctly: THE SPORTING NEWS says the Pacific-10 Conference is the strongest basketball league in the nation.

The Pac-10 is stacked. And the ACC—usually the top dog—is pretty stacked, too. But this season, the Pac-10 is the strongest at the top, as there are eight teams with a legit chance to make the NCAA field. There's one problem: The league is so strong that there will be some mediocre conference records, which may mean only five teams get NCAA bids.

One thing is for sure: The Pac-10 and the ACC are head-and-shoulders above the other leagues.

NOTE:
We list statistics with numerous players. The minimum to be listed: 4.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 45 percent from the field, 75 percent from the line, 35 percent from 3-point range, 4.0 apg, 1.0 spg, 1.0 bpg, 8.0 mpg.

inside dish

Ascending: California. The Golden Bears return nearly everybody but center Sean Marks from a practice season (thanks to an NCAA postseason ban). Cal has experience, depth and an offensive magician in guard Geno Carlisle. Forward Sean Lampley is a budding star, too.

Descending: Oregon State. Rebuilding the program may have been tougher than fourth-year coach Eddie Payne expected, especially when guys are leaving early (Corey Benjamin), transferring (John-Blair Bickerstaff) or having their kidneys lacerated (Ron Grady).

Biggest sneakers to fill: Arizona guard Miles Simon's. When the Wildcats needed leadership or help at the buzzer—be it at the Final Four or against Oregon State—they always turned to Simon. Arizona may fill his off-guard spot by committee, while point guard Jason Terry will assume the leadership role.

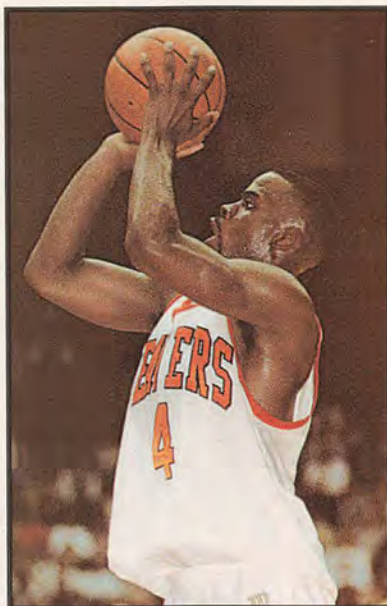
Most underrated player: Stanford forward Peter Sauer. He may be best-known for his resemblance to Kramer of *Seinfeld* fame, which is too bad, because he's a versatile talent who can penetrate, shoot from the perimeter and offer leadership.

Most overrated player: Cal guard Raymond "Circus" King. He is an exciting open-court player, but he's often out of control. Despite being an excellent student of the game, King nevertheless drove for an uncontested layup at the buzzer when Cal trailed UCLA by three last year. That's not the kind of decision-making you want from an on-court leader.

Coach on the hot seat: Kevin Eastman, Washington State. No coach could have easily handled the adversity he has had recently, and Eastman has assembled a commendable string of all-academic players. But fans in the Palouse are wondering why the talent level slipped after Kelvin Sampson left.

Best bets: The NCAA Tournament selection committee will realize that the league has sent a quartet to the Sweet 16 each of the past two years, then award it five tournament bids. But Arizona coach Lute Olson will complain again about a lack of respect, saying the league really deserved six. ... Bay Area sports fans disenchanted with the Latrell Sprewell and Eddie DeBartolo sagas will enjoy a heated Cal-Stanford rivalry in a pro-minded region. ... UCLA point guard Baron Davis will recover from a reconstructed left knee faster than expected. While all his moves won't return immediately, he will assume a valuable on-court coaching role.

Odds and ends: Washington has four sons of former Seattle Sonics: guard Donald Watts (son of Slick), center Marlon Shelton (Lonnie), guard Michael Westphal (Paul) and guard Bryan Brown (Fred). ... The Huskies and Trojans also dipped into the pro sports gene pool, as Washington forward Greg Clark is the brother of the Detroit Tigers' Tony Clark and USC forward Sam Clancy Jr.'s father played in the NFL. ... The Ducks rely heavily on foreigners: Forward Flo Hartenstein (Germany), center Chris Christoffersen (Denmark) and forward Skouson Harker (Alberta, Canada) should become key players.



Deaundra Tanner is a promising talent, but there aren't enough like him in Corvallis.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. UCLA (F JaRon Rush). Losing Toby Bailey, Jelani McCoy, J.R. Henderson and Kris Johnson sounds like a major bummer—until you consider that the Bruins hauled in five potential NBA players. Rush is a dynamic 6-7 wing who will fill a scoring void. He, along with guard Ray Young and center Dan Gadzuric, were McDonald's All-Americans. Gadzuric (6-11) is the best incoming big man in the nation. Jerome Moiso is a 6-11 post with advanced offensive skills, and 6-7 forward Matt Barnes doubled as a star prep tight end.
2. Arizona (F Michael Wright).
3. USC (G/F Quincy Wilder).
4. Washington (G Senque Carey).
5. Oregon (G Freddie Jones).
6. California (G/F Carl Boyd).
7. Washington State (G Jan-Michael Thomas).
8. Arizona State (G Alton Mason).
9. Stanford (G Tony Giovacchini).
10. Oregon State (G Ramunas Petraitis).

BY BRUCE PASCOE
(Tucson) Arizona Daily Star

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. UCLA | 6. USC |
| 2. Stanford | 7. Oregon |
| 3. Arizona | 8. Arizona St. |
| 4. California | 9. Washington St. |
| 5. Washington | 10. Oregon St. |

ALL-PAC-10

FIRST TEAM

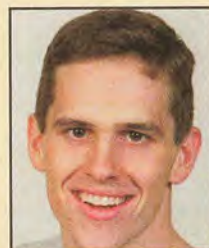
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/C	A.J. BRAMLETT, Arizona	6-11/217	Sr.
C	TODD MACCULLOCH, Washington	7-0/280	Sr.
F	MARK MADSEN, Stanford	6-8/235	Jr.
G	BARON DAVIS, UCLA	6-2/190	Soph.
G	ARTHUR LEE, Stanford	6-0/175	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	MIKE BATISTE, Arizona State	6-8/220	Sr.
F	SEAN LAMPLEY, California	6-7/210	Soph.
C	TIM YOUNG, Stanford	7-1/245	Sr.
G	JASON TERRY, Arizona	6-2/169	Sr.
G	DONALD WATTS, Washington	6-4/200	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

MARK MADSEN, F, Stanford



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

JARON RUSH, F, UCLA

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Arthur Lee, Stanford.

Best rebounder: Mark Madsen, Stanford.

Best playmaker: Arthur Lee, Stanford.

Best defender: Jason Terry, Arizona.

Best leaper: Mike Batiste, Arizona State.

Most versatile: Donald Watts, Washington.

Most flamboyant: Baron Davis, UCLA.

Best NBA prospect: Baron Davis, UCLA.



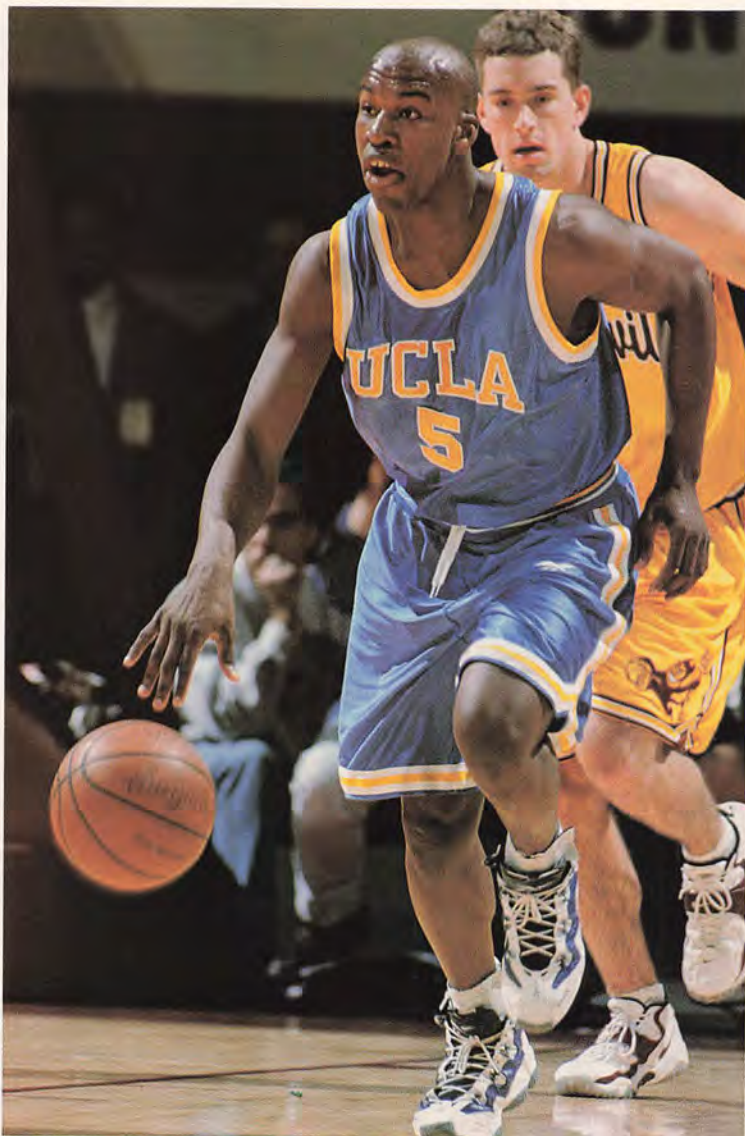
1. UCLA

Frontcourt: Provided UCLA doesn't run into another spate of off-court problems, nobody will have to play out of position this year. Netherlands native Dan Gadzuric will anchor the low post with another foreigner, West Indies native Jerome Moiso. At 6-11, 240 pounds, Gadzuric is a big, strong monster who already is drawing Bill Walton comparisons. Gadzuric, a McDonald's All-American considered by many to be the top freshman big man in the nation, played at Governor Dummer Academy in Massachusetts last season; he is a strong rebounder and shot blocker whose mature body belies his age. Moiso, who played at Milford Academy in Connecticut last season, has the ability to step back for some virtually unguardable perimeter shooting; he also is a premier shot blocker. In addition, Moiso, a lefthander, is a good passer who can play with his back to the basket. Another top recruit, 6-7 Matt Barnes, is a good option in the frontcourt when the Bruins face quicker lineups. Barnes is a versatile wing player who can post up, shoot the 3-pointer and drive to the hoop. Travis Reed, who proved himself in the NCAA Tournament last year, is a terrific role player who does the dirty work all great teams need done. JaRon Rush, a top-rate shooter with varied offensive skills, likely will be a fixture at small forward. Rush, another McDonald's All-American, is a do-it-all type who can score from anywhere on the court.

Backcourt: Baron Davis, who has advanced maturity, is a serious conference player of the year candidate if his knee holds up. An explosive potential lottery pick who can play either guard spot, Davis tore the ACL in his left knee in a second-round NCAA Tournament victory over Michigan. He is UCLA's leading returning scorer and rebounder, and he led last year's team in assists and steals. Davis, the Pac-10 Freshman of the Year last season, isn't expected to practice until November. Until then, there's more opportunity for freshman Ray Young on the perimeter. Young, who attended the same high school as Jason Kidd, is an explosive and athletic presence who should see significant minutes in a complementary role after earning McDonald's All-American honors. Earl Watson, a member of the Pac-10's All-Freshman team and the only Bruin to start every game last season, will continue to play both guard spots. He's a steady hand in a sea of young talent who teamed with Davis last season to give the Bruins their first set of true freshman starting guards since 1979-80 (Rod Foster and Michael Holton). Sophomore Ryan "Moose" Bailey, Toby's brother, will back up at both guard spots. He started at point guard for Penn State as a true freshman before transferring and sitting out last season. He isn't exceptionally quick but has solid hoops acumen. Diminutive senior Brandon Loyd is an ever-improving long-range bomber, and Rico Hines is a tough, capable defender. Sophomore Billy Knight is a tremendous 3-point threat.

Keys to success: Davis' knee must come around, and the newcomers must bond quickly. There's a ton of scoring to replace in Jelani McCoy, Kris Johnson, J.R. Henderson and Toby Bailey, but Rush probably will assume a large chunk of it. It will behoove the Bruins to take advantage of their depth with more running and pressing, too. Steve Lavin will have his hands full trying to balance the wants and needs of his incoming recruits, considered by many to be the best collection in the nation. But he has proven adept at handling difficult situations.

Outlook: The Bruins have a Fab Five-type freshman nucleus that, should it mature quickly, could push UCLA past everybody in the league. It will help if the sophomores can lead like seniors. The Bruins might be spectacular, and they might be a jumbled mess; quite possibly, they'll be a little of both. But they could be dangerous come tournament time.



It is vital that Davis, who has advanced maturity, is recovered from a knee injury he suffered in a second-round NCAA Tournament game against Michigan.

Bruins Data

Coach: Steve Lavin (48-17, 2 years; 5-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 24-9, Pac-10: 12-6/3rd. Lost to Kentucky in NCAA South semifinals.

Starters lost (3): Toby Bailey, G/F (17.9 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 73.7 FT%, 4.1 apg, 1.2 spg, 35.7 mpg); J.R. Henderson, C/F (19.0 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 53.6 FG%, 1.2 spg, 33.1 mpg); Kris Johnson, F/G (18.4 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 51.9 FG%, 83.3 FT%, 40.9 3-pt%, 32.5 mpg).

Others lost: Jelani McCoy, C (9.9 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 60.0 FG%, 21.3 mpg; declared for NBA draft).

Starters returning (2): Baron Davis, G, 6-2/Soph. (11.7 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 5.0 apg, 2.4 spg, 31.3 mpg); Earl Watson, G, 6-2/Soph. (5.8 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 3.2 apg, 1.9 spg, 32.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Rico Hines, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (10.6 mpg); Billy Knight, G/F, 6-5/Soph.; Brandon Loyd, G, 5-10/Sr.; Travis Reed, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.0 ppg, 52.3 FG%, 12.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Matt Barnes, F, 6-7/Fr.; Ryan "Moose" Bailey, 6-3/Soph. (transfer/Penn State); Dan Gadzuric, C, 6-11/Fr.; Jerome Moiso, C/F, 6-11/Fr.; JaRon Rush, F, 6-7/Fr.; Ray Young, G, 6-4/Fr.

Last league title: 1997.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1988.

Site: Los Angeles. **Home court:** Pauley Pavilion (12,800).

BRAN SPURLOCK

2. STANFORD

Frontcourt: This group is big, tough and deep. Center Tim Young is the imposing physical presence. Stanford's leading career shot blocker, Young has great hands and good feet. He is also agile, showing excellent passing skills and a deft shooting touch for a guy who is 7-1, 245 pounds. Young, who paced the team with an 8.1 rebounding average, has spent countless hours refining his game by watching tapes of former NBA greats and by attending big-man camps. Power forward Mark "Mad Dog" Madsen brings a vicious intensity that belies his friendly nature off the court. Madsen is a tremendous rebounder with huge hands who plays bigger than his 6-8 frame. His maturity helps, too. Madsen, who turns 23 in January, is a junior who spent two years on a Mormon mission after committing to Stanford in the fall of 1993. Peter Sauer adds several dimensions at small or power forward; he can score from outside or penetrate. But his most valuable trait may be his leadership skills. Mark Seaton is a steady-shooting, backup low-post player who can run the floor and is athletic, and reserves Ryan Mendez and David Moseley are good shooters. Mendez is dubbed Mr. Offense, as he is one of the best 3-point shooters in school history. At 6-7, he poses matchup problems at off-guard and small forward. Moseley is an athletic swingman noted for his defense and shooting acumen. The scary thing is that Stanford hardly seems to need highly regarded twins Jason and Jarron Collins. Jarron displayed a good shooting touch for a big man last year. A 6-9 sophomore, Jarron has the size, inside savvy, passing skills and ballhandling ability to be a top-flight power forward. He showed glimpses of the future by shining in the NCAA tourney. Jason, who redshirted last year because of a knee injury, is more of a back-to-the-basket type. He has soft hands and an underrated jump shot.

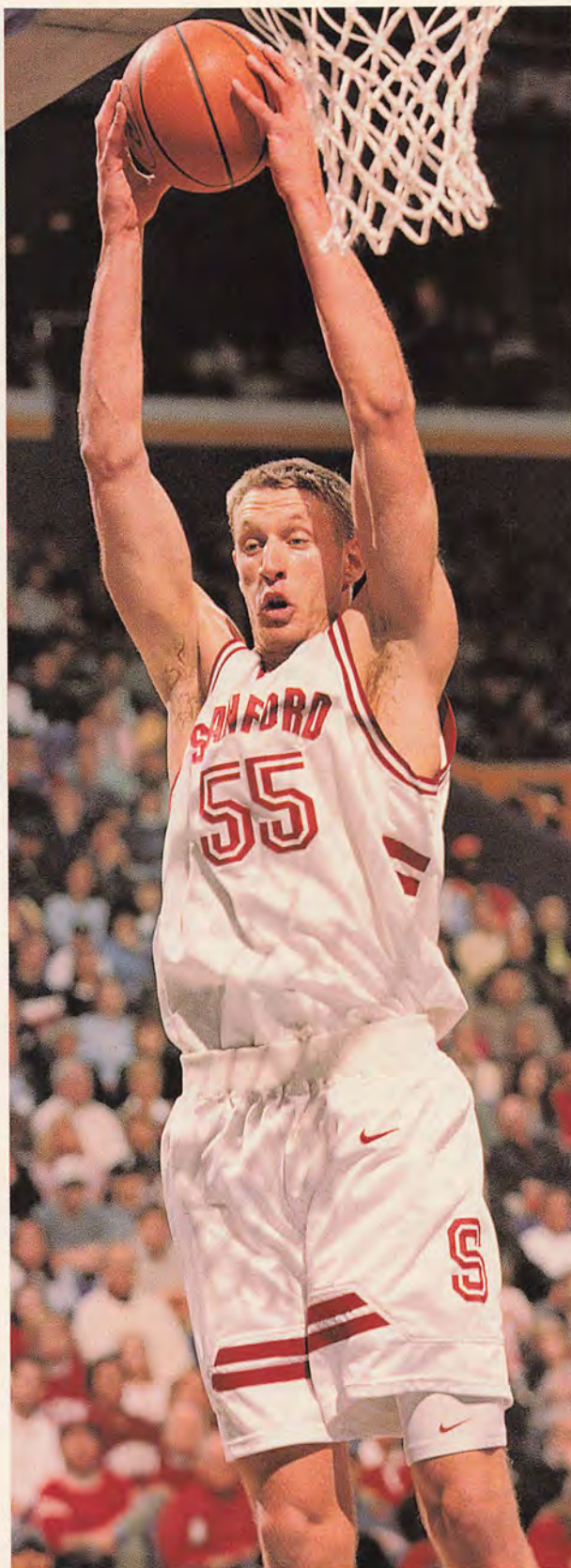
Backcourt: When Stanford started 18-0 without Brevin Knight, many observers assumed point guard Arthur Lee was playing well because Knight had schooled him for two years in practice. By the NCAA Tournament, it was obvious Lee simply was a talent in his own right, an excellent shooter and ballhandler with the lateral quickness to defend well. It's also a nice bonus when your point guard has the second-best career free-throw percentage (.856) in school history. Lee, who paced the Cardinal with a 14.5 scoring average, has a current string of 38 consecutive free throws made, second-best in Stanford history. Kris Weems, one of five Cardinal players to average in double figures in points, is an ideal backcourt mate, a solid spot-up shooter and good defender. The Cardinal now have two promising point guards behind Lee: Mike McDonald, a quick sophomore who can score in spurts but possesses a quarterback's mentality, and Tony Giovacchini, a great passer in the open court who was the most highly recruited player in Utah last season.

Keys to success: Coach Mike Montgomery was uncomfortable with the spotlight last year's success brought Stanford, so just imagine how much he may squirm now. Another worry may be exceptionally quick opponents; Arizona drilled the Cardinal twice last year, 93-75 at Stanford and 90-58 at Arizona. The front line is especially plodding, but the Collins twins could help change that. Stanford may best compensate by developing additional ballhandlers and eating more time off the shot clock.

Outlook: Just about everyone else at Stanford wins national titles. Why not men's basketball, which has been without one since 1942? The capability is there, as only seldom-used Pete Van Elswyk isn't back from last season's team. But it's unclear how well the Cardinal will handle the unfamiliar role of being a favorite.

Cardinal Data

Coach: Mike Montgomery (235-132, 12 years; 389-209 overall, 20 years; 8-6 NCAA Tournament record.)
1997-98 record: 30-5. Pac-10: 15-3/2nd. Lost to Kentucky in NCAA national semifinals.
Starters lost: None.
Others lost: Pete Van Elswyk, F (3.1 rpg, 11.5 mpg).
Starters returning (5): Arthur Lee, G, 6-0/Sr. (14.5 ppg, 88.7 FT%, 44.3 3-pt%, 4.6 apg, 1.1 spg, 28.7 mpg); Mark Madsen, F, 6-8/Jr. (11.7 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 58.9 FG%, 26.2 mpg); Peter Sauer, F, 6-7/Sr. (9.2 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 81.5 FT%, 41.6 3-pt%, 23.8 mpg); Kris Weems, G, 6-3/Sr. (12.6 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 82.6 FT%, 38.2 3-pt%, 28.7 mpg); Tim Young, C, 7-1/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 51.4 FG%, 76.3 FT%, 1.2 bpg, 27.1 mpg).
Other returnees: Jarron Collins, F, 6-9/Soph. (3.5 rpg, 53.0 FG%, 13.5 mpg); Michael McDonald, G, 6-0/Soph.; Ryan Mendez, F/G, 6-7/Jr. (5.5 ppg, 46.2 FG%, 47.4 3-pt%, 12.2 mpg); David Moseley, F/G, 6-4/Jr. (6.1 ppg, 76.9 FT%, 42.2 3-pt%, 14.6 mpg); Mark Seaton, F, 6-9/Sr.
Top newcomers: Jason Collins, C, 6-10/Fr. (RS/knee); Tony Giovacchini, G, 6-2/Fr.; Kyle Logan, G/F, 6-5/Fr.
Last league title: 1963 (tie).
Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1994.
Site: Palo Alto, Calif. **Home court:** Maples Pavilion (7,391).



Young, part of a terrific front line, has great hands and good feet. He also has excellent passing skills and a deft shooting touch.

3. ARIZONA

Frontcourt: No longer will A.J. Bramlett be a complementary offensive cast member. Bramlett, a slender 6-11 senior, is a proven rebounder and defender, but he'll need to avoid stupid fouls and score on more than put-backs and dunks now that the team's primary scoring options aren't on the perimeter. Bramlett, whose quickness creates matchup problems with bulkier foes in the post, has been the Wildcats' top rebounder in each of the past two seasons. He honed his skills this summer by playing on a Nike Collegiate All-Star team that toured Europe and by attending Pete Newell's big man camp. Michael Wright was a standout for the USA Basketball's Men's Junior World qualifying team and in Chicago pro-am games last summer. Wright, a freshman, probably will beat out Eugene Edgerson, a bouncy, aggressive rebounder who lacks strong offensive skills, at power forward. Wright, who needs to avoid the foul trouble that plagued him in high school, can score, rebound and run the court. Edgerson is a relentless rebounder and a hard worker who made great strides with his offensive game last season; he refined his game by playing in the People to People tour in Tahiti over the summer. Lanky Donnell Harris is the wild card in the post. Harris battled gall bladder ailments last year and never regained the form he displayed in the 1997 championship game. Harris worked hard in the offseason to get stronger. For Arizona to shine, he must produce. Versatile Richard Jefferson, a McDonald's All-American and the Arizona Class 4A Player of the Year, has terrific quickness that will pose problems for defenders. He is a terrific athlete who likely will fill Michael Dickerson's small forward spot on the perimeter of the attack.

Backcourt: Jason Terry, the team's top returning scorer with an average of 10.6 points per game, loved playing the sixth-man role, but those days are finished. Most of the 35 minutes per game he figures to play will come at point guard. Terry, who needs 44 steals to become the school's career leader, must provide leadership to an inexperienced backcourt while also adding go-to man duties to his resume. Freshman Ruben Douglas, who will play both guard spots, is equally adept at shooting and penetrating the lane. Douglas was the leading prep scorer in California last season and is quick and athletic. Traves Wilson is probably the top defender in the freshman class. Wilson, who reminds many of former Wildcats standout Reggie Geary, could play any of the three perimeter spots. Last year marked Quynn Tebbs' first season of organized hoops in three years after he spent two years in Brazil on a Mormon mission and the 1996-97 season as a redshirt. He is a good shooter who should see action with the heavy losses in the backcourt. Luke Walton, Bill's son, will help on the wings and inside. The freshman has great hands, handles the ball well, shoots with efficiency and can drive the hoop.

Keys to success: The departed Mike Bibby/Miles Simon/Dickerson trio, which accounted for 66 percent of the offense last season, was the most productive perimeter gang coach Lute Olson ever assembled. At the same time, Olson has brought in probably his best recruiting class. It just needs time to mature. Of the veterans, Harris could create a twin-tower option in the post if he better harnesses his considerable offensive skills; if nothing else, he can take a foul or two for Bramlett.

Outlook: Olson is known for unexpected levels of success with younger groups, so the Wildcats—whose .816 winning percentage (298-67) over the past 11 years is the best in the nation—may well be a factor in the Pac-10 race and produce a respectable tournament run. They'll gain confidence from a soft non-conference schedule, though an early-season matchup with rising power Tennessee will be a good test.



Bramlett, a slender and quick 6-11 senior who is a proven rebounder and defender, needs to be more than a complementary offensive contributor for the Wildcats.

Wildcats Data

Coach: Lute Olson (373-113, 15 years; 565-205 overall, 25 years; 31-19 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in 1997).

1997-98 record: 30-5. Pac-10: 17-1/1st. Lost to Utah in NCAA West finals.

Starters lost (4): Mike Bibby, G (17.2 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 75.5 FT%, 38.7 3-pt%, 5.7 apg, 2.4 spg, 32.1 mpg/declared for NBA draft); Bennett Davison, F (7.6 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 59.0 FG%, 1.6 spg, 25.0 mpg); Michael Dickerson, F (18.0 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 75.8 FT%, 40.4 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 28.4 mpg); Miles Simon, G (17.2 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 77.8 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 4.7 apg, 1.3 spg, 31.5 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (1): A.J. Bramlett, C/F, 6-11/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 51.4 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 26.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Eugene Edgerson, F, 6-6/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 48.6 FG%, 70.4 FT%, 17.3 mpg); Donnell Harris, C, 6-11/Sr. (11.4 mpg); Ortege Jenkins, G, 6-2/Soph.; Josh Pastner, G, 5-11/Jr.; Quynn Tebbs, G, 6-1/Soph.; Jason Terry, G, 6-2/Sr. (10.6 ppg, 82.7 FT%, 4.3 apg, 1.7 spg, 22.8 mpg); Justin Wessel, F, 6-8/Soph.

Top newcomers: Ricky Anderson, F, 6-9/Fr.; Ruben Douglas, G, 6-5/Fr.; Richard Jefferson, F, 6-8/Fr.; Luke Walton, F, 6-8/Fr.; Traves Wilson, G, 6-3/Fr.; Michael Wright, F, 6-8/Fr.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1984.

Site: Tucson, Ariz. **Home court:** McKale Center (14,489).

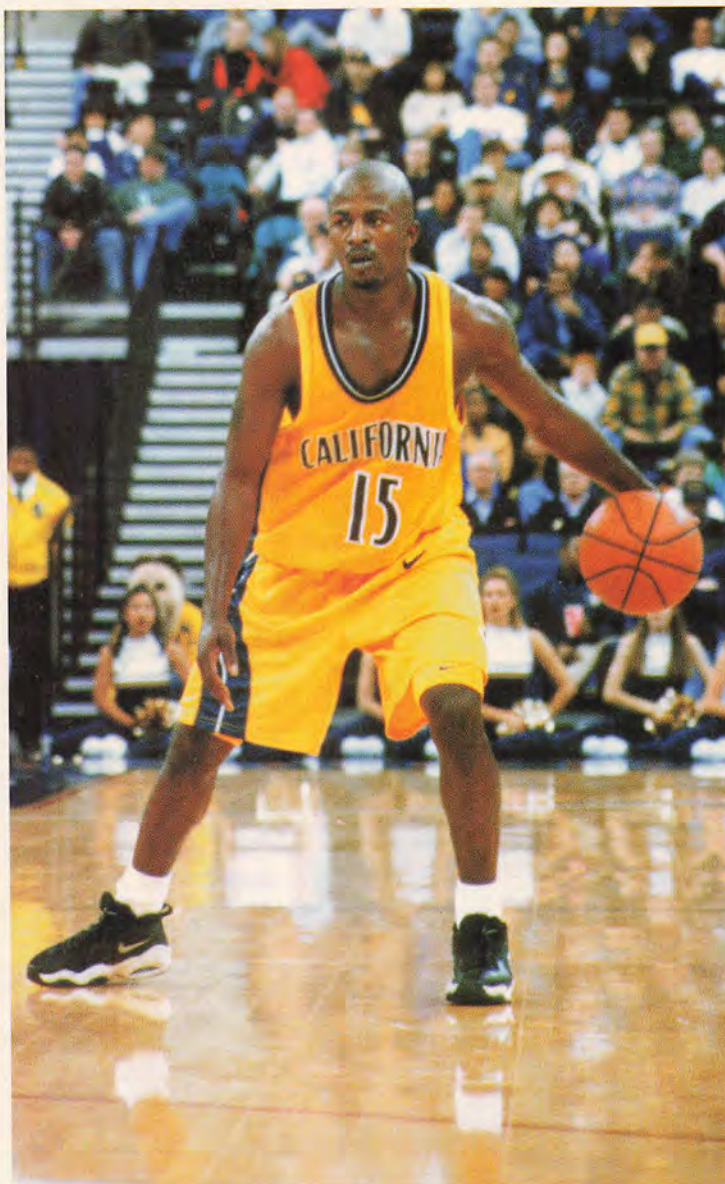
4. CALIFORNIA

Frontcourt: Francisco Elson didn't make the splash many envisioned upon arriving from junior college last season. Just the second 7-footer in Cal history, Elson is an athletic big man who runs the court well. Elson, who is from the Netherlands, is a good rebounder and shot blocker, but he needs to become more aggressive around the hoop. A pair of intriguing newcomers will join Elson in the low post. Shaha Gordon is a strong 240-pounder from Israel who has some perimeter skills but isn't overly quick. A late addition to the Golden Bears' recruiting class who played at St. Thomas More Academy in Connecticut last season, Gordon spent the summer playing for Israel's Under 22 National Team. Another new big man, 6-11 Solomon Hughes, is a slender, agile post player. Hughes originally signed with Tulane but opted to spend last year at Fork Union Military Academy in Virginia. Hughes has a tremendous upside. While in prep school, Hughes added almost 35 pounds. Sean Lampley brings an inside-outside game that could make him the team's second-leading scorer, behind Geno Carlisle. Coaches hope Lampley builds on the furious finish he enjoyed last season. Lampley's strength and athletic ability make him special. He also is a fine rebounder who consistently beats bigger foes to the glass. Mike Gill, a strong slasher and shooter who can play both forward spots, may put together a big year after injuries limited him last season. Despite his ailments, he was tabbed team MVP. Gill is versatile enough to play anywhere from point guard to power forward, but small forward is his best fit. Gill, a senior who began his career at Pittsburgh before transferring to a junior college, is a smooth operator with deceptive speed on the wing.

Backcourt: Junior college transfer Carl Boyd and Donte Smith, the Washington, D.C., Player of the Year, beef up an already strong unit. Boyd has good slashing and ball-handling abilities. Cal coach Ben Braun likes Boyd's versatility; the swingman can post up or beat a foe off the dribble. While Smith can play both guard spots, he might play most at point guard, backing up or beating out Raymond "Circus" King. Smith is a natural scorer with good range. Best yet, he is a leader who always plays hard. Freshman Dennis Gates immediately should become a defensive role player, if nothing else. Gates is a consummate team player and leader who led Whitney Young High in Chicago to the Illinois Class AA (large school) state championship. King is an extremely quick point guard who thrives on the break. The junior, who began his career at San Diego State, is a flashy performer who is becoming a better distributor. The backcourt anchors are Thomas Kilgore, who shot a team-best 37.5 percent from 3-point land, and Carlisle, who can create shots from virtually anywhere on the floor. Kilgore, who began his career at Eastern Michigan, can play either guard slot and is the team's best defender on the perimeter. He uses his quickness well on each end of the court. Carlisle, an honorable-mention All-Pac-10 pick last year, is a scoring machine who possesses a good shot. Carlisle, who began his career at Northwestern, led the Bears with a 17.9 scoring average last season.

Keys to success: Cal needs to utilize its depth, pressing and running more, without worrying about fouls and fatigue. If the young frontcourt players mature quickly, the Bears will have an enviable height advantage over everybody in the league except Stanford. With capable free-lance artists such as Carlisle, Kilgore and Lampley, the normally structured Braun probably will allow plenty of freedom again. Not a bad idea.

Outlook: Braun has recruited well in his short stint in Berkeley, and it should pay off just when the Bears regain tournament eligibility this season. Their depth and veteran savvy could even give them an edge against talented-but-young Arizona and UCLA.



Kilgore is an important part of the Golden Bears' backcourt. He is a superb defender and is the most consistent outside shooter on the team.

Bears Data

Coach: Ben Braun (35-24, 2 years; 368-259 overall, 21 years; 5-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 12-15. Pac-10: 8-10/T5th.

Starters lost (1): Sean Marks, F (9.8 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 47.8 FG%, 1.0 spg, 26.1 mpg).

Others lost: Sean Jackson, G/F (13.9 mpg); Kenyon Jones, C (6.0 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 47.7 FG%, 16.7 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Geno Carlisle, G, 6-3/Sr. (17.4 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 75.2 FT%, 1.0 spg, 34.7 mpg); Francisco Elson, C, 7-0/Sr. (5.0 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 18.4 mpg); Thomas Kilgore, G, 6-2/Sr. (12.9 ppg, 71.3 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 2.1 spg, 30.7 mpg); Sean Lampley, F, 6-7/Soph. (8.4 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 24.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Michael Gill, F, 6-6/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 78.0 FT%, 1.1 spg, 24.2 mpg); Robbie Jones, G, 6-3/Jr. (46.3 FG%, 11.5 mpg); Raymond King, G, 5-10/Jr. (6.5 ppg, 3.3 apg, 1.3 spg, 28.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Carl Boyd, F/G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Dennis Gates, G, 6-4/Fr.; Shaha Gordon, C, 6-10/Fr.; Solomon Hughes, F/C, 6-11/Fr.; Donte Smith, G, 6-2/Fr.

Last league title: 1960.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Berkeley, Calif. **Home court:** Oakland Arena (19,200).

5. WASHINGTON

Frontcourt: German 7-footer Patrick Femerling signed with a pro team in Berlin over the summer, but it isn't a big loss. Femerling had limited offensive range and never really was effective at power forward. Todd MacCulloch, who last year became the sixth player in NCAA history to lead the nation in field-goal percentage two seasons, always was the bigger force: The 7-footer's

soft jumper is so well-constructed—he began working on it as a Winnipeg, Manitoba, high school star in a league that prohibited dunks—that opponents best defend him by pushing him off the block or keeping the ball out of his hands. Sophomore Thalo Green and junior Chris Walcott, an occasional hero off the bench last year, are likely power forwards. The Huskies took off when Green assumed a starting role from Femerling late last season. Late signee Marlon Shelton, the son of ex-NBA player Lonnie, is a promising 260-pounder who can bang the boards and play good defense, while the athletic Greg Clark, a sophomore who transferred from Long Beach State, will help at both forward spots. Freshman Grant Leep, a gifted athlete, has solid post moves and a good mid-range jumper.

Backcourt: Donald Watts was probably the most improved player in the Pac-10 last year. He claims a new reduced-sugar diet did the trick; others believe the improvements were mental. Whatever the case, there's little doubt he hurts opponents with sharp shooting and fearless slashing. Backcourt mate Deon Luton, a junior who set school single-season marks for 3-pointers made (75) and attempted (203) last year, is a capable spot-up shooter. Dan Dickau may share point guard with Senque Carey, a versatile freshman with a pass-first mentality.

Key to success: Without Femerling around to collect a foul or two, MacCulloch will have to be careful. The Husky offense changes dramatically without him. Finding stability at point guard will be no problem, but a quick answer at power forward from Clark, Leep or Shelton is needed.

Outlook: Coach Bob Bender says the Huskies became more determined after losing their Sweet 16 game to Connecticut at the buzzer. They'll need that kind of motivation to survive the cut-throat upper division of the Pac-10: Cal, Arizona, Stanford, UCLA and possibly USC will be looking to gun down the new target from the Northwest.

Huskies Data

Coach: Bob Bender (68-72, 5 years; 128-129 overall, 9 years; 2-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-10. Pac-10: 11-7/4th. Lost to Connecticut in NCAA East semifinals.

Starters lost (2): Patrick Femerling, C/F (5.7 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 25.3 mpg; left to pursue pro career in Germany); Jan Wooten, G (5.6 ppg, 47.7 FG%, 72.5 FT%, 1.1 spg, 23.4 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Thompson, G (9.5 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Deon Luton, G, 6-4/Jr. (15.4 ppg, 73.0 FT%, 36.9 3-pt%, 33.7 mpg); Todd MacCulloch, C, 7-0/Sr. (18.6 ppg, 9.7 rpg, 65.0 FG%, 70.4 FT%, 1.3 bpg); Donald Watts, G, 6-4/Sr. (16.9 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 71.4 FT%, 3.6 apg, 1.6 spg, 33.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Dan Dickau, G, 6-0/Soph. (79.5 FT%, 53.3 3-pt%, 9.4 mpg); Thalo Green, F, 6-6/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 53.6 FG%, 16.0 mpg); Michael Johnson, G, 6-4/Soph. (35.3 3-pt%, 12.2 mpg); Chris Walcott, F, 6-7/Jr. (52.8 FG%, 13.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Senque Carey, G, 6-4/Fr.; Greg Clark, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Long Beach State); Grant Leep, F, 6-7/Fr.; Marlon Shelton, C, 6-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1985 (tie).



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Luton, who is a capable spot-up shooter, is part of a formidable Washington backcourt.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Seattle. **Home court:** Hec Edmundson Pavilion (7,900).

6. USC

Frontcourt: The Trojans' top post producer last season, Jarvis Turner, will have plenty of help this time. Junior college transfer Brian Scalabrine is a big, strong presence who could start immediately, while touted freshman Sam Clancy will provide help with defense and rebounding. Shannon Swillis proved an imposing shot blocker and rebounder as a freshman, while Greg Lakey is a well-rounded talent who benefited from 19 starts last year. David Bluthenthal, a freshman, is a relatively quick big man with many offensive weapons, but he is not known as a strong defender. Small forward Adam Spanich is a streaky long-range bomber whose 3-pointers in regulation and overtime beat Arizona last year. The senior, USC's top returning scorer with a 12-point average, paced the Pac-10 with 73 3-pointers last season. The interior defense figures to get a boost from the newcomers.

Backcourt: Point guard Kevin Augustine had shoulder surgery after nagging problems hampered him throughout the season as a freshman. He should be a dependable starter for the next three years with the departure of Gary Johnson, while freshman Brandon Granville could become a capable backup. Versatile JC swingman Quincy Wilder may be the most productive of coach Henry Bibby's newcomers; Wilder is an athletic combo guard who originally signed with Washington while spurning UCLA. Elias Ayuso is a solid shooter and the grizzled veteran of this team. Swingman Jeff Trepagnier is yet another athletic sophomore who grew up quickly last year. He is perhaps the most exciting player on the team.

Keys to success: As with Arizona and UCLA, Bibby will have to bring together a large group of new talent and keep everybody happy. It's a nice problem to have after injuries plagued the Trojans a year ago. USC has good shooters and plenty of slashers, but it lacks size (Scalabrine, at 6-9, is the team's tallest player) and it needs to improve defensively.

Outlook: Bibby played his freshmen frequently last year, seemingly practicing for this season. The developing group never looked better than in season-ending wins over Arizona and Arizona State, and there's likely to be some resulting confidence that carries over. USC should display that level of play much more often this year.

Trojans Data

Coach: Henry Bibby (26-30, 2 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 9-19. Pac-10: 5-13/8th.

Starters lost (2): Gary Johnson, G (13.3 ppg, 75.4 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 3.7 apg, 2.1 spg, 30.5 mpg); Gary Williams, F (7.6 ppg, 45.3 FG%, 74.5 FT%, 38.0 3-pt%, 19.4 mpg).

Others lost: Ken Sims, G (12.2 mpg); Behzad Souferian, G; Anthony White, F (5.4 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 52.6 FG%, 19.0 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Elias Ayuso, G, 6-2/Sr. (8.8 ppg,

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79.5 FT%, 35.9 3-pt%, 19.1 mpg); Greg Lakey, F, 6-8/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 18.5 mpg); Jarvis Turner, F, 6-8/Jr. (10.6 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 1.0 spg, 23.0 mpg).
Other returnees: Kevin Augustine, G, 6-0/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 40.7 3-pt%, 3.7 apg, 23.2 mpg); Adam Spanich, F, 6-7/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 82.9 FT%, 42.0 3-pt%, 19.5 mpg); Shannon Swillis, F, 6-6/Soph. (5.9 rpg, 52.0 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 22.2 mpg); Jeff Trepagnier, G, 6-4/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 1.0 spg, 16.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: David Bluthenthal, F, 6-7/Fr.; Sam Clancy Jr., F, 6-7/Fr.; Brandon Granville, G, 5-10/Fr.; Brian Scalabrine, F/C, 6-9/Soph. (JC); Jason Thomas, F, 6-4/Fr.; Quincy Wilder, G/F, 6-3/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1985 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Los Angeles. **Home court:** L.A. Sports Arena (15,509).

7. OREGON

Frontcourt: The Ducks are big and deep, but there's little experience. Flo Hartenstein is a strong, athletic big man who showed promise the latter half of last season. Coach Ernie Kent feels the sophomore from Germany is ready to blossom. Mike Carson disappointed for three years, then came on strong early last season before an ankle injury forced him to redshirt. Power forward A.D. Smith's ability to hit the perimeter shot is a bonus, while Denmark native Chris Christoffersen is a huge athlete who can handle the ball and block shots. But the 7-2 freshman isn't quick. He and junior college power forward Skouson Harker should find roles right away. Harker can post up and hit the jumper.

Backcourt: Despite losing Jamar Curry, the Ducks will be improved on the perimeter. It spoke well of the program's future when Oregon landed Frederick Jones, a two-time 4A player of the year in Oregon who is a potentially explosive scorer. He'll settle in at off-guard or small forward. Junior college transfer Alex Scales also will get plenty of time on the perimeter. Either of the newcomers may challenge Terik Brown, the starting off-guard who led Oregon with a 12.8 scoring average last season, for the role of leading scorer. JC transfer Darius Wright is more pass-minded than incumbent point man Mike McShane, who made great strides late last season. Wright is a smart player who comes from a winning program.

Key to success: Oregon must find a way for its confidence at cozy McArthur Court to carry over on the road. The Ducks were 3-9 away from home, and nobody exemplified the Jekyll-Hyde effect more than Brown, who averaged 14.8 points at home but just 8.6 on the road.

Outlook: The Ducks, who must blend in five newcomers, have enough quality depth, versatility and athleticism to break into the Pac-10's upper division, but they have little margin for error. Kent, who will be assisted by former Arizona State coach Don Newman, knows his troops will have to dominate at home and pick up a few surprises on the road to make the top five. But they should at least improve toward the end of the season, with an NIT bid likely.



Lazor, who began his career at Syracuse, has good quickness for a big man. The 6-9 Arizona State senior can beat defenders off the dribble and shoot capably from the perimeter.

Ducks Data

Coach: Ernie Kent (13-14, 1 year; 103-94 overall, 7 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-14. Pac-10: 8-10/T5th.

Starters lost (2): Jamar Curry, G (8.7 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 28.0 mpg); Henry Madden, F (12.6 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 46.7 FG%, 41.9 3-pt%, 29.1 mpg).

Others lost: Jonathan Nelson, F (6.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 17.9 mpg; transfer).

Starters returning (3): Terik Brown, G, 6-1/Sr. (12.8 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 79.1 FT%, 38.7 3-pt%, 27.7 mpg); Flo Hartenstein, C/F, 6-9/Soph. (4.2 rpg, 18.1 mpg); Mike McShane, G, 6-4/Jr. (4.7 ppg, 3.3 apg, 1.1 spg, 24.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Mike Carson, G, 7-0/Sr. (7.5 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 18.5 mpg; RS/foot); Donte Quinine, G/F, 6-6/Jr. (12.6 mpg); Yasir Rosemond, G, 6-1/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 36.8 3-pt%, 16.0 mpg); A.D. Smith, F, 6-8/Jr. (10.4 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 81.4 FT%, 44.8 3-pt%, 22.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Chris Christoffersen, C, 7-2/Fr.; Skouson Harker, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Frederick Jones, G/F, 6-3/Fr.; Alex Scales, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Darius Wright, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1945 (Pac-10 North).

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Eugene, Ore. **Home court:** McArthur Court (9,087).

8. ARIZONA STATE

Frontcourt: The Devils aren't going to

wear down anyone with their size—just two players are 6-9—but they at least have a bit more depth and versatility than a year ago. Mike Batiste is a banger and a strong leaper inside, and Bobby Lazor has good quickness for a big man. Lazor, an underrated senior who began his career at Syracuse, can beat defenders off the dribble and shoot capably from the perimeter. Last season, he ranked among Pac-10 leaders in scoring, rebounding, field-goal percentage, blocks and free-throw percentage. Lohnnie Tape', a JC transfer, is another strong, Batiste-type player. Freshman Chad Prewitt may swing his 235 pounds around for 10 minutes or so per game. It'll be a bonus if the Sun Devils get much help from forward Okeme Oziwo, who sat out last year after being involved in a car accident. Versatile Derrick Davis is the likely small forward.

Backcourt: Alton Mason, a quick JC transfer who signed with Marquette out of high school, is a true point guard who will take over for the departed Ahlon Lewis, who led the nation in assists last season. Kenny

SCOTT TROYANIS/ARIZONA STATE

Crandall, a tough-minded freshman, is expected to be a capable backup. Eddie House, a strong shooter and ballhandler, will return to his starting spot at off-guard, while Jason Patton again will back up at guard and small forward. Someone must pick up the slack created by the departure of Jeremy Veal, who left as Arizona State's leading career scorer.

Key to success: The Sun Devils were a hardy bunch last year, nearly cracking the NCAA field with just seven scholarship players. This time, numbers won't be as much of a problem as chemistry: There's a new coach and eight new players. New coach Rob Evans—who did a masterful job rebuilding Mississippi—says he wants an up-tempo offense with aggressive defense and rebounding. Unlike last year, the Sun Devils can afford to give it a shot.

Outlook: The gray clouds finally are lifting over otherwise sunny Tempe after point-shaving allegations, campus theft by players and other problems hastened the exit of coach Bill Frieder. All that matters now under Evans, who replaces interim coach Don Newman after six seasons at Mississippi, is progress on the court. There won't be much right away.

Sun Devils Data

Coach: Rob Evans (First year; 86-81 overall, 6 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 18-14. Pac-10: 8-10/T5th. Lost to Hawaii in NIT first round.

Starters lost (2): Ahlon Lewis, G (7.5 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 85.3 FT%, 9.2 apg, 1.7 spg, 37.0 mpg); Jeremy Veal, G (20.8 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 46.1 FG%, 78.7 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 3.6 apg, 1.5 spg, 37.5 mpg).

Others lost: Urit Kelly, F (4.6 ppg, 50.5 FG%, 13.9 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Mike Batiste, F, 6-8/Sr. (15.3 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 55.6 FG%, 1.1 spg, 1.6 bpg, 31.8 mpg); Eddie House, G, 6-1/Jr. (11.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 75.9 FT%, 40.1 3-pt%, 2.0 spg, 30.7 mpg); Bobby Lazor, F, 6-9/Sr. (16.8 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 55.8 FG%, 77.7 FT%, 40.5 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 1.2 bpg, 32.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Okeme Oziwo, F, 6-8/Jr. (RS/car accident); Jason Patton, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (6.1 ppg, 45.4 FG%, 72.1 FT%, 12.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Chris Bryant, G, 6-3/Fr.; Kenny Crandall, G, 6-4/Fr.; Derrick Davis, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Willie Hendricks, G/F, 6-6/Fr.; Alton Mason, G, 6-2/Soph. (JC); Chad Prewitt, F/C, 6-9/Fr.; Lohmnie Tape', F, 6-7/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1975 (WAC).

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Tempe, Ariz. **Home court:** University Activity Center (14,198).

9. WASHINGTON ST.

Frontcourt: Carlos Daniel was a workhorse the Cougars will miss; his rebounding, scoring and heart won't be replaced easily. Eddie Miller, who sat out last year when Ventura (Calif.) College dropped its basketball program, will take over at power forward. The sophomore is a bruising kind of guy who's bigger than Daniel but not as polished a scorer. Kojo Mensah-Bonsu is an active senior who can help at both forward spots. There's also perimeter-oriented Steve Slotemaker, a senior who paced the Cougs in 3-point shooting by hitting 43.2 percent of his shots last year, and freshman Mike Bush, who is a good penetrator. Chris Crosby, Washington State's leading returning scorer with an 11.8 average, is a skilled junior who trained several weeks

in the offseason with the Denver Broncos. Starting center Leif Nelson will be expected to play more, ideally with less than the 275 pounds he carried last year. Hard-working sophomore center Brian Stewart should move into the rotation.

Backcourt: Wazzu is counting on JC transfer Jan-Michael Thomas as a top scorer. He'll probably settle in at off-guard, pushing Kab Kazadi to the point. Kazadi should play enough there to adequately rest starter Blake Pengelly. Pengelly's offense suffered last year, when he averaged almost 35 minutes a game and Kazadi played mostly at off-guard.

Keys to success: Thomas and Miller won't have much time to adjust to Division I. Their scoring will be needed immediately, especially if the Cougars are to improve upon an average of just 72 points. They also need better shooting and more easy fast-break baskets; the depth and increased quickness should help create them. A decrease in turnovers also would help, as the Cougs ranked last in the Pac-10 in assist/turnover ratio last year.

Outlook: Coach Kevin Eastman spent the past two seasons putting out fires, with many players transferring or leaving the program. Things were especially bleak when leading scorer Rodrigo de la Fuente bolted for a pro team in Spain on the eve of the 1998 Pac-10 opener. Now it appears Eastman has a stable, relatively deep group. There are five seniors on the roster for the first time since the 1991-92 team advanced to the NIT. But improvements won't always show in the win column. Not in this league.

Cougars Data

Coach: Kevin Eastman (59-59, 4 years; 183-134 overall, 11 years).

1997-98 record: 10-19. Pac-10: 3-15/T9th.

Starters lost (1): Carlos Daniel, F (16.1 ppg, 10.1 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 35.1 mpg).

Others lost: Rodrigo de la Fuente, G (16.1 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 51.7 FG%, 83.6 FT%, 39.1 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 2.6 spg, 34.7 mpg; left to play in Spain).

Starters returning (4): Chris Crosby, F, 6-7/Jr. (11.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 37.9 3-pt%, 27.3 mpg); Kab Kazadi, G, 6-0/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 1.0 spg, 26.6 mpg); Leif Nelson, C, 6-10/Sr. (5.5 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 49.6 FG%, 16.6 mpg); Blake Pengelly, G, 5-10/Jr. (8.0 ppg, 39.8 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 34.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Will Hutchens, G, 6-3/Sr.; Kojo Mensah-Bonsu, F, 6-5/Sr. (9.2 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 51.2 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 1.4 spg, 22.6 mpg); Steve Slotemaker, F, 6-9/Sr. (5.8 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 43.2 3-pt%, 18.8 mpg); Brian Stewart, C, 6-10/Soph.

Top newcomers: Mike Bush, G/F, 6-6/Fr.; Eddie Miller, F, 6-8/Soph.; Soph. (JC); Milton Riley, F, 6-8/Fr.; Jan-Michael Thomas, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1941.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Pullman, Wash. **Home court:** Friel Court (12,058).

10. OREGON STATE

Frontcourt: What the Beavers lack in experience, they may make up for in size and potential. Jason Heide spent much of last year ill, while 7-1 South Africa native George von Backstrom will share time in the low post with Heide after just two years of organized ball. von Backstrom redshirted last season to work on his game. Coach Eddie Payne hopes to run

the offense through them more often than he did with departed big man Terrill Woods. At power forward, JC transfer Clifton Jones gives the Beavers a more athletic option than returnees Iyan Walker or Sasa Petrovic, though at 205 pounds, Jones—a terrific shot blocker—may be a bit slender for that spot.

Backcourt: The premature losses of Corey Benjamin (declared for the NBA draft) and John-Blair Bickerstaff (transferred to Minnesota) weren't entirely unexpected, but they were damaging nonetheless. JC arrival Ramunas Petratis is an intelligent, well-rounded 22-year-old Lithuanian who should take over one of the wing spots, while Josh Steinthal, a transfer from Memphis, has the ability to be the team's best shooter—and one of the best in the league. OSU also returns Ron Grady, a consistent shooter whose season was cut short by a lacerated kidney. Point guard Deandra Tanner surfaced as the Beavers' most promising talent last season, though he, like many of his teammates, could use work on free-throw shooting. Some think he is the best guard in Corvallis since Gary Payton. Freshmen Adam Masten and Moses Olson are considered heady players and good shooters who are expected to impact.

Keys to success: The Beavers will have to make up for the loss of Benjamin's athleticism with better shooting. This effort may center on Petratis, who will get help from Tanner and Grady. OSU also must improve its atrocious free-throw shooting. Winning games while shooting 60.3 percent from the line is difficult. It's also imperative that Payne quickly integrates five newcomers on a team that features several good shooters.

Outlook: The Beavers built false confidence with a cupcake non-conference schedule last year, only to start Pac-10 play 0-6. Even if they don't struggle out of the Pac-10 gate after playing a marginally tougher non-conference season, Oregon State still could be in trouble. The Beavers don't have Pac-10-level talent.

Beavers Data

Coach: Eddie Payne (26-61, 3 years; 185-170 overall, 12 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-17. Pac-10: 3-15/T9th.

Starters lost (3): Corey Benjamin, G/F (19.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 53.9 FG%, 71.3 FT%, 1.9 spg, 26.9 mpg/declared for NBA draft); John-Blair Bickerstaff, G (8.6 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 54.4 FG%, 35.1 3-pt%, 3.5 apg, 1.1 spg, 30.2 mpg; transfer/Minnesota); Terrill Woods, C (5.1 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 22.2 mpg).

Others lost: Sonny Benjamin, F (47.1 FG%, 17.4 mpg); Todd Marshall, F/C (4.7 rpg, 45.8 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 22.1 mpg); Jerome Vaden, G (10.8 ppg, 82.5 FT%, 21.5 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Ron Grady, G, 6-3/Jr. (10.4 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 80.0 FT%, 26.1 mpg); Deandra Tanner, G, 6-1/Soph. (9.0 ppg, 40.7 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.7 spg, 26.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Jason Heide, C, 6-11/Soph.; Sasa Petrovic, F, 6-8/Sr.; Iyan Walker, F, 6-8/Jr. (50.8 FG%, 12.4 mpg); George von Backstrom, C, 7-1/Jr. (RS/experience).

Top newcomers: Clifton Jones, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Adam Masten, G, 6-5/Fr.; Moses Olson, G, 6-3/Fr.; Ramunas Petratis, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Josh Steinthal, G, 6-5/Soph. (transfer/Memphis).

Last league title: 1990 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1990.

Site: Corvallis, Ore. **Home court:** Gill Coliseum (10,400).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: Maryland. In the 28 years the ACC has conducted a preseason basketball poll, the Terrapins have been picked ahead of North Carolina twice, the last time in 1980. If the media has been paying attention, it should happen again this year. The Terps have things in place for a nice NCAA tourney run.

Descending: Virginia. Former coach Jeff Jones was surprised when the Cavaliers were picked for eighth last year, but successor Pete Gillen will be surprised only if his first Virginia team *isn't* picked for last. The Cavaliers return just five scholarship players from a team that was 11-19.

Biggest sneakers to fill: North Carolina forward Antawn Jamison's. No one player can replace Jamison. Coach Bill Guthridge can only hope that one freshman (Jason Capel) makes up for some of the lost scoring and that another (Kris Lang) can help account for some of the rebounding.

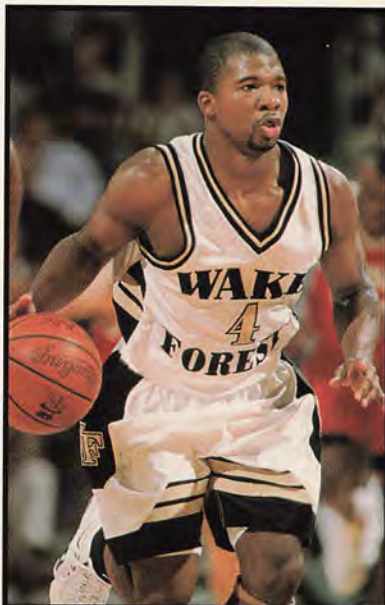
Most underrated player: North Carolina forward Ademola Okulaja. He has started more than 60 games over the past two seasons that have won back-to-back ACC championships and made consecutive Final Four appearances. He can guard people, rebound, find the open man and occasionally hit the 3-pointer. Not only that, he can speak six languages.

Most overrated player: Virginia guard Willie Dersch. Respected talent scout Howard Garfinkel says the ACC hasn't seen the Willie Dersch who came out of Flushing, N.Y., two years ago as a McDonald's and Parade All-American. Dersch would be the first to agree, and he's eager to make up for lost time under new coach Pete Gillen.

Coach on the hot seat: None. Four coaches in this league are institutions—Duke's Mike Krzyzewski, Georgia Tech's Bobby Cremins, Wake Forest's Dave Odom and Maryland's Gary Williams. The other five have been coaches in the conference for two seasons or fewer, with four jobs changing hands in less than 12 months. Cremins isn't on the hot seat, but he's working for a new athletic director, Dave Braine, who already has said he'd like to see Cremins have a deeper bench.

Best bets: Duke will be the first team picked first in the preseason to finish first in the regular season since the Blue Devils did it in 1992. ... Maryland will play in the NCAA Tournament for the sixth consecutive year; only 10 other teams have been in the past five. ... North Carolina is rebuilding, but count on the Heels finishing no worse than third in the regular season for the 33rd consecutive year. ... A freshman, most likely Jason Capel or Ronald Curry, will lead the Tar Heels in scoring. Adam Hall could accomplish the same feat at Virginia. ... Wake Forest's Robert O'Kelley finally will get his due as one of the nation's top guards.

Odds and ends: North Carolina has had 34 consecutive winning seasons. Wake Forest has the ACC's second-longest streak, at eight. ... Duke has won four outright ACC regular-season titles in the 1990s; no other team has done it more than once. ... Players leaving ACC teams before the end of their eligibility included Devonaire Deas (Florida State), Travis Spivey (Georgia Tech), Rouldra Thomas (N.C. State), Loren Woods (Wake Forest) and three Virginia players (Monte Marcaccini, Chase Metheny and Craig McAndrew).



O'Kelley's outstanding shooting skills make him one of the nation's premier guards.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. Wake Forest (F/C Darius Songaila). The Deacons brought in six players for the second year in a row, including a possible starting point guard in Broderick Hicks, size in Darius Songaila and Antwan Scott and good genes in Jerry Stackhouse's cousin, Craig Dawson.
2. North Carolina (F/G Jason Capel).
3. Maryland (G/F Danny Miller).
4. Georgia Tech (G Tony Atkins).
5. Clemson (C Chuckie Gilmore).
6. N.C. State (G Adam Harrington).
7. Florida State (F Damous Anderson).
8. Virginia (F/G Adam Hall).
9. Duke (F Corey Maggette).

By Doug Doughty
Roanoke (Va.) Times

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Duke | 6. NC State |
| 2. Maryland | 7. Georgia Tech |
| 3. North Carolina | 8. Florida State |
| 4. Clemson | 9. Virginia |
| 5. Wake Forest | |

ALL-ACC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
C	ELTON BRAND, Duke	6-8/260	Soph.
C	OBINNA EKEZIE, Maryland	6-10/262	Sr.
F/G	LARON PROFIT, Maryland	6-5/202	Sr.
G	DION GLOVER, Georgia Tech	6-5/235	Soph.
G	TRAJAN LANGDON, Duke	6-3/200	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	SHANE BATTIER, Duke	6-8/215	Soph.
F/G	JASON CAPEL, North Carolina	6-8/218	Fr.
F	KENNY INGE, NC State	6-8/211	Soph.
G	ED COTA, North Carolina	6-1/185	Jr.
G	TERRELL MCINTYRE, Clemson	5-9/175	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

TRAJAN LANGDON, G, Duke



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

JASON CAPEL, F/G, North Carolina

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Trajan Langdon, Duke.

Best rebounder: Elton Brand, Duke.

Best playmaker: Ed Cota, North Carolina.

Best defender: Alvin Jones, Georgia Tech.

Best leaper: Laron Profit, Maryland.

Most versatile: Laron Profit, Maryland.

Most flamboyant: Dion Glover, Georgia Tech.

Best NBA prospect: Trajan Langdon, Duke.



1. DUKE

Frontcourt: After suffering a broken foot that kept him sidelined for 15 games and threatened to end his season in December, center Elton Brand returned for the last 10 games, although the layoff affected him. He averaged more than 17 points before the injury and just over 10 after his return. But by the time he played for the victorious U.S. team in the Goodwill Games, he was close to 100 percent. He probably will be joined in the starting lineup by fellow sophomore Shane Battier, the Blue Devils' leading shot-blocker last season and potentially one of the nation's top defensive players. Chris Carrawell will be difficult to dislodge at small forward after earning a starting job at the end of last season, but the Blue Devils may choose to go with a bigger lineup that includes Chris Burgess, who needs to improve his free-throw shooting. Foes no doubt would like to borrow the 6-10, 240-pound tandem of Taymon Domzalski and Matt Christensen, who will spend considerable time in their warmups. Unheralded Nate James, coming off a medical redshirt year, will join with freshman Corey Maggette to compensate for the loss of Mike Chappell, who transferred to Michigan State. The Blue Devils will miss the versatility and productivity of Roshown McLeod, who averaged 15.3 points while playing only 23.7 minutes per game, but they have a stable of forwards (Carrawell, Maggette and James) who present the same inside-outside threat. James, in particular, could be a big surprise.

Backcourt: No one would argue that William Avery is more gifted physically than his predecessor at point guard, Steve Wojciechowski. The trick for Avery will be in matching Wojo's leadership and defensive tenacity. Avery took more than 100 3-point shots last season, but hit only 29.6 percent and must remember that the first option from the perimeter is two-time All-ACC selection Trajan Langdon. Although he averaged fewer than 15 points last year, Langdon is capable of hitting for 30 or more. As a shooter, he has few peers in college basketball. As one of only two pure guards on the team, he also can expect to see time at point guard. In those instances when Avery is out of the game and Langdon swings to the point, look for Carrawell and Maggette to fill the traditional big guard role.

Key to success: For all of its frontcourt depth, Duke is an injury from being in huge trouble at guard. The Blue Devils know what they have in Langdon, but it has yet to be determined if Avery is ready to run the show. He has the potential to be one of the nation's top point guards. Coach Mike Krzyzewski always has shied from standard designations for players, but the fact remains that Duke lacks natural ballhandlers.

Outlook: The Blue Devils have not won an ACC Tournament since 1992, but they have finished first in the regular season three times in the past five years, including 1998, and should repeat. As young as Duke is, with six scholarship sophomores, few teams are more experienced. By tournament time, the Blue Devils will have been tested against a schedule that includes non-conference games against Kentucky, Michigan, Florida, St. John's and DePaul. This is one of a handful of teams that has a legitimate shot at the national championship.

Blue Devils Data

Coach: Mike Krzyzewski (432-153, 18 years; 505-212 overall, 23 years; 43-12 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in '91, '92).

1997-98 record: 32-4, ACC: 15-1/1st. Lost to Kentucky in NCAA South final.

Starters lost (2): Roshown McLeod, F (15.3 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 49.4 FG%, 70.6 FT%, 41.1 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 23.7 mpg); Steve Wojciechowski, G (6.7 ppg, 73.4 FT%, 38.8 3-pt%, 4.6 apg, 2.1 spg, 28.2 mpg).

Others lost: Mike Chappell, F (7.1 ppg, 46.4 FG%, 43.4 3-pt%, 14.4 mpg; transfer/Michigan State), Ricky Price, F/G; Todd Singleton, F.

Starters returning (3): Elton Brand, C, 6-8/Soph. (13.4 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 59.2 FG%, 1.5 spg, 1.3 bpg, 23.5 mpg); Chris Carrawell, F, 6-6/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 36.8 3-pt%, 22.2 mpg); Trajan Langdon, G, 6-3/Sr. (14.7 ppg, 88.6 FT%, 39.5 3-pt%, 28.8 mpg).

Other returnees: William Avery, G, 6-2/Soph. (8.5 ppg, 74.4 FT%, 19.3 mpg); Shane Battier, F, 6-8/Soph. (7.6 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 53.9 FG%, 73.1 FT%, 1.4 spg, 1.5 bpg, 24.6 mpg); Chris Burgess, C, 6-10/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 12.6 mpg); Taymon Domzalski, C, 6-10/Sr. (56.7 FG%, 9.9 mpg); Nate James, F, 6-6/Soph. (RS/ankle); J.D. Simpson, G, 6-4/Soph.; Jay Heaps, G, 5-9/Sr.

Top newcomers: Matt Christensen, F, 6-10/Soph. (RS); Corey Maggette, F, 6-6/Fr.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1995.

Site: Durham, N.C. **Home court:** Cameron Indoor Stadium (9,314).



When he's not dunking, Battier augments one of the nation's top frontcourts by intimidating foes with his shot-blocking skills.

2. MARYLAND

Frontcourt: Obinna Ekezie has been one of the most improved players in the ACC over the course of his career. But if he makes first-team All-ACC, as many predict, it might represent the greatest improvement of all. Ekezie hasn't made first-, second- or even third-team ACC and had only one field goal in each of Maryland's past two NCAA Tournament games. He must pick up his rebounding to help compensate for the departure of Rodney Elliott, who concluded his career as one of the ACC's most underrated players. Ekezie did not have more than 11 rebounds in a game last year and had as many double-figure rebounding games, four, as Laron Profit, a wing player slated to start at small forward. Bottom line: Ekezie must get tougher. Profit led the ACC in steals and may be the quickest player in the conference, but, somewhere along the line, he has lost his jumper. He shot 29.1 percent on 3-pointers, including 11-of-53 (20.8 percent) in ACC play. Terence Morris, the likely third starter, might be the best ACC player nobody knows about. At 6-9 and 205 pounds, he could stand to get stronger, but he runs the court like a thoroughbred and has uncommon range for a power forward (13-of-37 on 3-point attempts). Backup center Mike Mardesich could start for about 295 teams in Division I and will be the first player off the bench from a group of frontcourt reserves that includes fifth-year senior Brian Watkins, LaRon Cephas and first-year bruiser Lonny Baxter. Mardesich, redshirted in 1996-97, came off the bench to score 12 points and grab nine rebounds in the Terrapins' 89-83 overtime victory over then-No. 1 North Carolina in January.

Backcourt: The Terrapins list freshman Danny Miller as a guard, but it will be interesting to see who handles the ball more, Miller or Profit. Certainly, Miller is one of the top shooters to come into college basketball this season, a prospect who disappointed Duke and Virginia with his selection of Maryland. Terrell Stokes has started at point guard for the past two seasons, but he has been in and out of coach Gary Williams' doghouse. Thus, Williams will take a long look at JC All-American Steve Francis, who is taller than Stokes and more athletic. Combo guard Juan Dixon, a 1997 signee, sat out the first semester last year while attempting to meet NCAA eligibility guidelines. Eventually he posted the required test score and entered school in time to practice and travel with the team in the second semester.

Keys to success: Williams needs to look back only as far as the 1996-97 season to find a Maryland team that self-destructed because of weak senior leadership. Stokes has the opportunity to become a three-year starter, but he will have to reckon with Francis and deal with the possibility of reduced playing time. Ekezie won't pose problems from a chemistry standpoint, but he can't be the complementary player he has been in the past. To this point in his career, he has matched up better with Clemson's Harold Jamison than North Carolina's Antawn Jamison.

Outlook: This team has Final Four potential, although the Terps have not gone as far as the regional final in nine seasons under Williams. Heck, Maryland hasn't made the ACC Tournament final since 1984, but this group could be special. Profit, Ekezie and Stokes have a combined 204 career starts. Williams has won more than 25 games only once in his 20 seasons as a Division I coach. This should be the second.



No one doubts Profit's quickness, but he needs to re-gain his jumper if a veteran Maryland team hopes to fulfill its Final Four dreams.

Terrapins Data

Coach: Gary Williams (164-112, 9 years; 372-240 overall, 20 years; 10-8 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 21-11, ACC: 10-6/3rd. Lost to Arizona in NCAA West semifinals.

Starters lost (2): Rodney Elliott, F (15.0 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 48.5 FG%, 37.8 3-pt%, 28.9 mpg); Sarunas Jasikevicius, G (12.4 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 75.9 FT%, 39.7 3-pt%, 3.6 apg, 1.2 spg, 29.3 mpg).

Others lost: Matt Kovarik, G (48.4 FG%, 15.3 mpg); Atman Smith, G (quit team).

Starters returning (3): Obinna Ekezie, C, 6-10/Sr. (12.8 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 48.4 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 28.0 mpg); Laron Profit, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (15.8 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 70.7 FT%, 3.3 apg, 2.7 spg, 1.1 bpg, 31.5 mpg); Terrell Stokes, G, 6-0/Sr. (5.4 ppg, 41.5 FG%, 4.7 apg, 1.3 spg, 28.1 mpg).

Other returnees: LaRon Cephas, F, 6-7/Soph.; Norman Fields, G, 6-0/Sr.; Matt Hahn, G, 6-0/Jr.; Mike Mardesich, C/F, 7-0/Soph. (5.4 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 18.2 mpg); Terence Morris, F, 6-9/Soph. (7.4 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 52.3 FG%, 35.1 3-pt%, 16.0 mpg); Brian Watkins, F, 6-9/Sr.

Top newcomers: Lonny Baxter, F, 6-8/Fr.; Juan Dixon, G, 6-3/Fr. (RS); Steve Francis, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Danny Miller, G, 6-6/Fr.

Last league title: 1995 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1993.

Site: College Park, Md. **Home court:** Cole Field House (14,500).

3. NORTH CAROLINA

Frontcourt: If Antawn Jamison and Vince Carter had elected to return for their senior year, the Tar Heels may have had the best frontcourt in the country. Both were first-team All-ACC selections as juniors—and both were NBA lottery picks. One of their former classmates, Ademola Okulaja, is the only returnee from a four-man frontcourt rotation that included senior Makhtar Ndiaye. Okulaja will be counted on to produce leadership, as well as increased scoring and his customary intangibles. Freshman small forward Jason Capel is a candidate to lead the team in scoring, provided he doesn't have a recurrence of the back problems that bedeviled him last summer. He is the son of Old Dominion coach Jeff Capel and younger (and taller) brother of former Duke guard Jeff Capel Jr. There is not a proven scorer among a group of post players that includes sophomores Brendan Haywood, Brian Bersticker and Vasco Evtimov (back from a one-year military tour in France) and freshman Kris Lang. Redshirt freshman Orlando Melendez, who went up against Carter in practice every day last season, could be a surprise at small forward. Haywood was the one freshman who saw substantial playing time last year. At 7-0, 265, he has the kind of size that is hard to overlook. He came to Chapel Hill with a reputation as something of a project, but nobody questioned whether Haywood was an ACC-caliber player by the end of the year. Given Carolina's history for developing big men, it is not unreasonable to think he might someday be All-ACC.

Backcourt: Point guard Ed Cota is like Okulaja in that he seemingly has been at UNC forever. But he hasn't been counted on to score, at least not the way he will this year. After leading the ACC in assists last year, Cota will be the on-court leader of a young team that will include his likely backcourt partner and heir apparent, Ronald Curry. But Curry may be with the Tar Heels football team for at least the start of workouts, which means sophomore Max Owens, Capel or Melendez could begin the season at shooting guard. Owens arrived in Chapel Hill with glowing notices about his shooting ability, but he didn't show it last season; then again, did he not show it because he didn't get a chance or did he not get the chance because he wasn't showing it in practice? Other scholarship guards include Terrence Newby and Michael Brooker, but walk-on Brad Frederick could get more time than any of them. He is the son of Kansas athletic director Bob Frederick.

Keys to success: The Tar Heels will rely heavily on newcomers Capel, Curry, Lang and Melendez for scoring. Jamison and Carter were the biggest "name" losses, but Carolina needs to find some way to replace Shammond Williams' 3-point threat. Williams, who also was a fine assist man, was the guy the Tar Heels wanted at the line at the end of games. If Cota can maintain his 82.4 percent free-throw accuracy from last season, he'll be the guy.

Outlook: If a team other than North Carolina had lost so much firepower, it would be getting a lot of nods for the second division. But the ACC won't be as good as it has been, so a 25th consecutive NCAA Tournament appearance is likely. You can forget about a third consecutive Final Four trip, although this Carolina team should be deeper than last year's and give coach Bill Guthridge more options, especially on defense.

Tar Heels Data

Coach: Bill Guthridge (34-4, 1 year; 4-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 34-4. ACC: 13-3/2nd. Lost to Utah in NCAA national semifinals.

Starters lost (4): Vince Carter, F/G (15.6 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 59.1 FG%, 41.1 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 31.2 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Antawn Jamison, F (22.2 ppg, 10.5 rpg, 57.9 FG%, 40.0 3-pt%, 33.1 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Makhtar Ndiaye, C (5.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 23.8 mpg); Shammond Williams, G (16.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 91.1 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.0 spg, 32.9 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (1): Ed Cota, G, 6-1/Jr. (8.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 49.3 FG%, 82.4 FT%, 7.4 apg, 1.6 spg, 33.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Brian Bersticker, F/C, 6-11/Soph. (55.6 FG%); Michael Brooker, G/F, 6-6/Soph.; Vasco Evtimov, F, 6-10/Soph. (RS/military obligation in France); Brad Frederick, G/F, 6-5/Sr.; Brendan Haywood, C, 7-0/Soph. (53.0 FG%, 8.1 mpg); Terrence Newby, G, 6-2/Jr.; Ademola Okulaja, F, 6-9/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 1.2 spg, 31.3 mpg); Max Owens, G/F, 6-4/Soph.

Top newcomers: Jason Capel, F/G, 6-8/Fr.; Ronald Curry, G, 6-2/Fr.; Kris Lang, F/C, 6-10/Fr.; Orlando Melendez, F/G, 6-8/Fr. (RS/foot).

Last league title: 1994.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1974.

Site: Chapel Hill, N.C. **Home court:** Dean Smith Center (21,572).



The lone remnant of last season's four-man frontcourt rotation, Okulaja needs to increase his scoring and be a leader.

4. CLEMSON

Frontcourt: It might surprise some people to learn that Harold Jamison started only 12 games last year, since he clearly was the most effective Tigers big man. He was one of the ACC's best rebounders, particularly on the offensive end, but he has been handicapped by an inability to make free throws. Jamison and fellow widebody Tom Wideman have shared low-post responsibilities (occasionally playing at the same time) for three years, and last year they added a third tag-team partner, 7-1 Adam Allenspach, who started 10 games but averaged fewer than nine minutes. Freshman Chucky Gilmore enters the mix this year for a team that has six players who weigh at least 230 pounds. Tony Christie, who was ready to transfer if former coach Rick Barnes hadn't left, started 25 games at small forward and was one of the ACC's top 3-point shooters. Mohamed Woni and Andrius Jurkunas, who was redshirted last season, add height and versatility. Jurkunas established himself as a 3-point threat as a freshman in 1995-96 but was dreadful in that department in '96-97. He was red-shirted last year after patellar tendon surgery.

Backcourt: Terrell McIntyre is the guy who makes the Tigers go, which means they were in trouble when he was unable to practice for nearly two months, although he missed only three games. He scores, defends, protects the ball (2.3-to-1 assists-to-turnover ratio last season) and makes free throws. Plus, he was the Tigers' most dangerous 3-point shooter. Greg Buckner nominally was the Tigers' second backcourt starter last year, but he was at his best when posting up. Clemson will miss Buckner's scoring, leadership and toughness. Vincent Whitt is the most natural shooting guard on the roster, but he was only 2-of-26 last year on 3-pointers, which means backup point guard Johnny Miller or signee Will Solomon could see plenty of action alongside McIntyre. Miller, who set an Atlantic 10 freshman record with 73 3-pointers for Temple in 1994-95, has had three knee operations since arriving at Clemson and was only 29-of-102 on threes last year. Another freshman, Dustin Braddick, could see time at several positions after accumulating more than 1,000 points and 500 rebounds in high school.

Keys to success: Somebody has to be able to score other than McIntyre, who was one of only two double-figure scorers for Clemson last year (he also had 154 assists). Christie and Whitt have scoring potential but have been up and down. Christie, for example, was one of the league's most accurate 3-point shooters but poor from the line. The Tigers, in fact, were the worst free-throw shooting team (61.4 percent) in the ACC last year, by far.

Outlook: First-year coach Larry Shyatt, a former Clemson assistant whose only season as a college head coach came last year at Wyoming, is greeted by a strange combination, as this team has almost nothing but post men and point guards. There is considerable experience, with seven players remaining from the Sweet 16 team of 1997. But poor free-throw shooting teams usually don't go far in the post-season. Clemson lost nine games last season by five points or less.

Tigers Data

Coach: Larry Shyatt (First year; 19-9 overall, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 18-14. ACC: 7-9/T4th. Lost to Western Michigan in NCAA Midwest first round.

Starters lost (2): Greg Buckner, G (16.3 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 1.6 spg, 31.9 mpg); Iker Iturbe, F (5.8 ppg, 47.1 FG%, 17.3 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (3): Harold Jamison, F, 6-8/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 59.2 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 24.8 mpg); Terrell McIntyre, G, 5-9/Sr. (13.9 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 77.9 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 5.3 apg, 2.0 spg, 32.4 mpg); Tom Wideman, C, 6-10/Sr. (4.4 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 53.3 FG%, 19.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Adam Allenspach, C, 7-1/Soph.; Tony Christie, F, 6-6/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 41.5 3-pt%, 22.2 mpg); Andrius Jurkunas, F, 6-9/Jr. (RS/knee); Johnny Miller, G, 6-0/Sr. (4.3 ppg, 15.7 mpg); Vincent Whitt, G, 6-6/Jr. (5.5 ppg, 18.7 mpg); Mohamed Woni, C, 6-9/Soph. (52.3 FG%, 15.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Dustin Braddick, F/G, 6-5/Fr.; Chuckie Gilmore, C, 6-8/Fr.; Will Solomon, G, 6-2/Fr.

Last league title: 1990.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1995.

Site: Clemson, S.C. **Home court:** Littlejohn Coliseum (10,980).



Clemson knows it can count on McIntyre to score, but the offensively-challenged Tigers need to find the diminutive point guard some help.

5. WAKE FOREST

Frontcourt: Although Loren Woods at one time was viewed as the likely successor to Tim Duncan, his transfer to Arizona isn't a devastating loss. The Deacons learned to play without him last year, when he took a month's leave of absence to clear his head. Forwards Niki Arinze, Rafael Vidaurreta and Josh Shoemaker started no fewer than 17 games each, although it's an odd lot. Arinze is the smallest of the three, at 6-5, but plays closest to the basket. Vidaurreta and Shoemaker are listed at 6-9, but need to become more productive to hold off the challenge of a talented freshman class that includes Lithuanian Darius Songaila and Antwan Scott, described by coach Dave Odom as "the most underrated player we got."

Backcourt: It was easy to overlook Robert O'Kelley's 53-to-71 assists-to-turnovers ratio last year, when he was named ACC Freshman of the Year, because of his tremendous shooting ability. But the departure of three-year starter Tony Rutland makes playmaking more of a priority. O'Kelley's shooting ensures that he will play, but it may be in tandem with freshman Broderick Hicks, more of a natural playmaker. Odom expects a big improvement from James Griffin after an undistinguished freshman year. Look for Craig Dawson, Jerry Stackhouse's cousin, to get significant minutes at a wing position.

Key to success: Wake Forest had 121 more turnovers than assists last year, and the lack of a bona fide playmaker contributed to the Demon Deacons compiling the lowest field-goal percentage (40.5) in the ACC. The Deacons ranked second in the league in 3-point percentage, but opponents can take that away without an inside threat.

Outlook: With 12 scholarship players in its sophomore and freshman classes, Wake may be too young to, say, win 20 games. But the Deacs started four freshmen and barely missed the NCAA Tournament last year. So don't count them out.

Demon Deacons Data

Coach: Dave Odom (182-93, 9 years; 220-135 overall, 12 years; 10-7 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 16-14. ACC: 7-9/T4th. Lost to Vanderbilt in NIT second round.

Starters lost (1): Tony Rutland, G (12.7 ppg, 80.5 FT%, 39.6 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 30.9 mpg).

Others lost: Loren Woods, C (8.8 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 2.3 bpg, 25.2 mpg; transfer/Arizona).

Starters returning (4): Niki Arinze, F, 6-5/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 24.1 mpg); Robert O'Kelley, G, 6-1/Soph. (16.6 ppg, 80.6 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 29.6 mpg); Josh Shoemaker, F, 6-9/Soph. (4.2 rpg, 46.7 FG%, 20.0 mpg); Rafael Vidaurreta, F/C, 6-9/Soph. (4.5 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 23.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Joseph Amonett, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (78.3 FT%, 11.0 mpg); James Griffin, G, 6-2/Soph. (9.6 mpg); Aron McMillian, F/C, 6-9/Soph.

Top newcomers: Craig Dawson, F, 6-5/Fr.; Broderick Hicks, G, 6-1/Fr.; Ervin Murray, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Antwan Scott, F, 6-8/Fr.; Darius Songaila, F/C, 6-9/Fr.

Last league title: 1995 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Winston-Salem, N.C. **Home court:** Lawrence Joel Coliseum (14,407).



Inge, the team's top rebounder last season, is one of several young, promising frontcourt players for NC State, which means the Wolfpack won't be as perimeter-oriented as in years past.

6. NORTH CAROLINA STATE

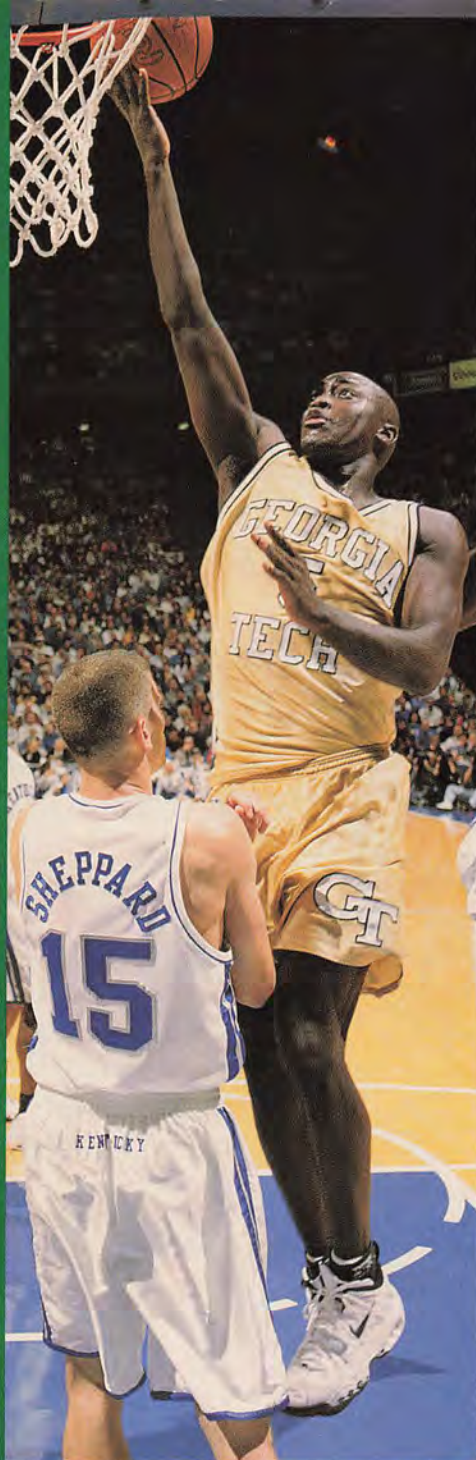
Frontcourt: The Wolfpack has been perimeter-oriented for several years now, but coach Herb Sendek finally has some experience in the frontcourt. Kenny Inge was an ACC All-Freshman selection last year, when he led the team in rebounding, and he's State's only returning double-figure scorer; he's also the league's leading returning rebounder. The Wolfpack has a plethora of young power players; the only problem is keeping them healthy. After missing the last six weeks of his freshman year in 1996-97, Damon Thornton played in only three games last year before breaking a foot. Ron Kelley missed almost a month because of an injury, which gave another freshman post player, Cornelius Williams, some valuable experience. There's no question there's talent in Raleigh.

Backcourt: With the top two scorers

from last year's team—C.C. Harrison and Ishua Benjamin—gone, Sendek will have matchup problems if he wants to use returning point guards Justin Gainey and Archie Miller at the same time. Gainey is a playmaker, while Miller is an outside threat, but neither is taller than 6-0 or has blinding quickness. As a result, look for recruit Adam Harrington to get extensive playing time. At 6-4, Harrington has size over the other State guards, and he was one of the best shooters in the 1997-98 recruiting class nationally.

Key to success: The backcourt must play well. Miller went through a stretch last season when he scored in double figures eight times in 10 games and had nine points in a ninth game, but he hit a wall at the end of the season. The year before, Gainey was a first-team All-ACC Tournament pick. They've done it before, but can they do it consistently?

Outlook: Sendek has received considerable praise for what he has done with sup-



BRIAN SPURLOCK

Glover, who is the ACC's top returning scorer, needs to improve his shooting range.

posedly overmatched teams in his first two seasons at State, but one fact remains: State is 9-23 in regular-season ACC games on his watch. A first-division finish is a stretch.

Wolfpack Data

Coach: Herb Sendek (34-30, 2 years; 97-56 overall, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 17-15. ACC: 5-11/T8th. Lost to Georgia in NIT second round.

Starters lost (2): Ishua Benjamin, G (11.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 80.3 FT%, 3.8 apg, 2.0 spg, 34.7 mpg); C.C. Harrison, G (16.6 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 73.5 FT%, 43.7 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 36.4 mpg).

Others lost: Luke Buffum, F; Rouldra Thomas, F

(transfer).

Starters returning (3): Justin Gainey, G, 6-0/Jr. (5.3 ppg, 1.2 spg, 30.7 mpg); Kenny Inge, F, 6-8/Soph., 11.0 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 51.6 FG%, 1.3 spg, 1.0 bpg, 32.3 mpg); Ron Kelley, C, 6-10/Soph. (8.3 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 42.0 3-pt%, 23.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Archie Miller, G, 5-9/Soph. (7.4 ppg, 87.5 FT%, 42.3 3-pt%, 22.5 mpg); Damon Thornton, F/C, 6-8/Soph. (RS/foot); Tim Wells, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.9 ppg, 46.3 FG%, 89.7 FT%, 15.7 mpg); Cornelius Williams, C, 6-11/Soph. (12.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: Keith Bean, F, 6-8/Fr.; Adam Harrington, G, 6-4/Fr.; Brian Keeter, G, 6-2/Fr.

Last league title: 1989.

Last NCAA appearance: 1991.

Site: Raleigh, N.C. **Home court:** Reynolds Coliseum (12,400).

7. GEORGIA TECH

Frontcourt: Once rated among the top players in his class, Alvin Jones' stock plummeted in the summer before his senior year in high school, partly because of an eye operation. To the Yellow Jackets' delight, his stock is going back up. Jones is an athletic, aggressive widebody who had more than twice as many blocks (141) as any other ACC player last season. But he needs to become more of a consistent scorer and rebounder to help offset the loss of three-time All-ACC selection Matt Harpring. In mid-December, Jones will be joined by former Indiana player Jason Collier, who will give Tech an imposing 1-2 inside punch. Collier doesn't like playing with his back to the basket, which means he'll be the power forward in a twin-tower duo. Jason Floyd, who scored in double figures seven times last year, is a leading candidate for the small forward spot, along with '96-97 starter Jon Babul, who was redshirted last season.

Backcourt: Dion Glover could stand to improve his range and shot selection, but he's the top returning scorer in the ACC, and that's not a bad place to start. Tony Akins will be given every opportunity to become the fourth freshman to start at point guard for Georgia Tech in as many years. Taking some of the pressure off Akins will be T.J. Vines, who was getting more playing time than fellow freshman Travis Spivey by the end of last season. The Yellow Jackets will be uncommonly deep with the addition of Darryl LaBarrie, an all-freshman choice in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference two years ago before transferring from Florida A&M.

Key to success: For the second year in a row, the Yellow Jackets were undone by a freshman point guard. But Akins enters the program more touted than Kevin Morris or Spivey, both of whom have left the program. If Akins fails, Cremins could have insurance policies in the forms of Vines and LaBarrie.

Outlook: The Yellow Jackets' recent lack of success obscures the fact that Cremins has won three ACC championships in his 17 years at Georgia Tech. Don't look for No. 4 this year, but Tech has the talent to make the NCAA Tournament for the first time in three years and only the second time since 1993.

Yellow Jackets Data

Coach: Bobby Cremins (326-204, 17 years; 426-274

overall, 23 years; 15-11 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 19-14. ACC: 6-10/T6th. Lost to Penn State in NIT third round.

Starters lost (3): Matt Harpring, F (21.6 ppg, 9.4 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 81.0 FT%, 1.4 spg, 36.3 mpg); Michael Maddox, F (13.2 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 47.5 FG%, 38.1 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 1.0 bpg, 31.7 mpg); Travis Spivey, G (5.7 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 4.3 apg, 1.5 spg, 29.0 mpg; transfer/Iowa State).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (2): Dion Glover, G, 6-5/Soph. (18.4 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 2.1 spg, 35.2 mpg); Alvin Jones, C, 6-11/Soph. (6.8 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 49.7 FG%, 4.3 bpg, 30.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Jon Babul, F, 6-7/Soph. (RS/foot); Jason Floyd, G/F, 6-6/Jr. (6.4 ppg, 70.3 FT%, 38.6 3-pt%, 16.9 mpg); Pablo Machado, C, 6-10/Jr.; T.J. Vines, G, 5-10/Soph. (14.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Tony Akins, G, 6-0/Fr.; Jason Collier, C, 7-0/Jr. (transfer/Indiana; eligible second semester); Darryl LaBarrie, G, 6-3/Soph. (transfer/Florida A&M).

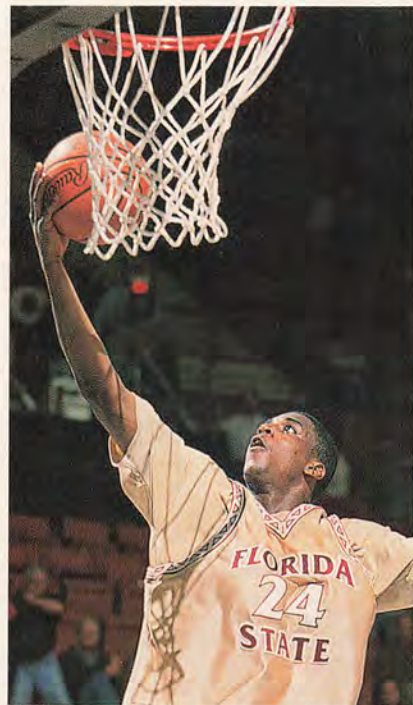
Last league title: 1996.

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Atlanta. **Home court:** Alexander Memorial Coliseum (10,215).

8. FLORIDA STATE

Frontcourt: Randell Jackson's ill-advised decision to skip his senior year and apply for the NBA draft (in which he was not selected, by the way) leaves the Seminoles without a proven scorer in the frontcourt. Small forward Ron Hale averaged 14.5 points in Florida State's two NCAA Tournament games and played in every game last year, as did 7-2 Karim Shabazz. They have the inside track on starting jobs. One-time Kentucky signee Oliver Simmons will get a look at power for-



ED NESSER / TSN

A standout defender, Baker could be a deadly 3-point shooter if he can avoid injuries.

ward after an undistinguished sophomore year, but don't be surprised if Damous Anderson, the Georgia junior college player of the year, makes an impact.

Backcourt: Late-season personal and

injury problems obscured what had been an outstanding year for shooting guard Terrell Baker, who may have been the Seminoles' best perimeter defender. He also is the team's only returning double-figure scorer. If his right shoulder is healthy, Baker can be a dangerous 3-point shooter. At point guard, coach Steve Robinson has two candidates who were in the program last season but did not play: 1997 partial qualifier Delvon Arrington and Adrian Crawford, a transfer from Tulsa who has experience at both guard spots. Crawford's dad, Coleman, is a FSU assistant.

Key to success: Corey Louis and Jackson never lived up to the buildup that preceded them at Florida State, but they did rank 1-2 on the team in rebounding last year and each averaged double-figure scoring totals. Shabazz appears to be the only threat in the middle, although Hale may be ready to emerge as an all-around player.

Outlook: Robinson's first season had to be considered a success, with the Seminoles making the NCAA Tournament for the first time in five seasons. He might take on legend status if FSU makes it back to the NAAs this year.

Seminoles Data

Coach: Steve Robinson (18-14, 1 year; 64-32 overall, 3 years; 2-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 18-14. ACC: 6-10/T6th. Lost to Valparaiso in NCAA Midwest second round.

Starters lost (4): LaMarr Greer, G/F (11.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 75.0 FT%, 1.0 spg, 30.9 mpg); Randell Jackson, F (12.7 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 48.7 FG%, 72.0 FT%, 1.2 bpg, 28.0 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Corey Louis, C (10.7 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 55.6 FG%, 1.6 bpg, 27.6 mpg); Kerry Thompson, G (8.8 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 72.4 FT%, 5.4 apg, 1.9 spg, 33.5 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (1): Terrell Baker, G, 6-5/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 79.8 FT%, 1.9 spg, 28.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Ron Hale, F, 6-8/Jr. (5.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 17.8 mpg); Karim Shabazz, C, 7-2/Soph. (5.1 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 55.5 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 16.2 mpg); Oliver Simmons, F, 6-8/Jr.; Ronald Thompson, F, 6-7/Soph. (transfer/Tulsa); Antwaun Dixon, F, 6-5/Fr.; Emanuel Mathis, G, 6-3/Fr.; Justin Mott, F/C, 6-10/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1991 (Metro).
Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.
Site: Tallahassee, Fla. **Home court:** Leon County Civic Center (12,500).

9. VIRGINIA

Frontcourt: There is no post player on the roster who can match the offensive skills of departed Norman Nolan, who was third in the ACC in scoring and rebounding as a senior. Indeed, the only two post players in the program are foul-prone Colin Ducharme and unproven Kris Hunter. Both ranked among the ACC's top 10 shot-blockers, though. There is a good chance that a freshman will start at small forward, with Adam Hall and Chris Williams having played well in summer all-star games.

Backcourt: Point guards Donald Hand and Chezley Watson struggled last season, but that was to be expected. Most would agree they are ACC-caliber players, Hand because



Because of his excellent passing ability, Dersch may be better suited to play in the backcourt, but his lack of quickness could pose problems when trying to matchup with speedy ACC guards.

of his quickness and Watson because of his athletic ability. They need to be more offensive-minded this season as Virginia attempts to replace all-time Division I 3-point leader Curtis Staples. Willie Dersch, a forward last season, tied Hand for the team lead with 99 assists and may be better suited for the backcourt, but he needs to improve his shooting ability and could have problems matching up with the ACC's quicker guards.

Key to success: Hall and Williams, signed by former coach Jeff Jones, could be better players than many services indicated and better recruits than a first-year coach could expect to inherit. On a team with five scholarship upperclassmen, none of whom averaged in double figures, both will have an opportunity to contribute immediately.

Outlook: The Cavaliers finished the season with 11 losses in their last 12 games, then lost two players who accounted for 59 percent of their offense in Staples and Nolan. Pete Gillen says this is the biggest challenge he has faced in 13 seasons as a

Division I coach. Believe him.

Cavaliers Data

Coach: Pete Gillen (First year; 274-128 overall, 13 years; 8-8 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 11-19. ACC: 3-13/9th.

Starters lost (2): Norman Nolan, F (21.0 ppg, 9.2 rpg, 52.4 FG%, 64.8 FT%, 35.9 mpg); Curtis Staples, G (18.1 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 40.7 FG%, 76.5 FT%, 39.0 3-pt%, 39.1 mpg).

Others lost: Mike Curtis, G; Monte Marcaccini, F (12.6 mpg/transfer); Craig McAndrew, F/C (transfer); Pete McLaughlin, G; Chase Metheney, C (3.0 rpg, 46.3 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 10.0 mpg/transfer).

Starters returning (3): Willie Dersch, F/G, 6-5/Jr. (6.5 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 3.3 apg, 33.9 mpg); Colin Ducharme, C/F, 6-9/Jr. (7.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 73.3 FT%, 1.1 bpg, 23.2 mpg); Donald Hand, G, 5-11/Soph. (4.7 ppg, 3.3 apg, 1.2 spg, 24.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Kris Hunter, C, 6-10/Jr. (1.2 bpg, 12.3 mpg); Greg Lyons, G, 6-4/Soph.; Chezley Watson, G, 6-2/Soph. (15.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Adam Hall, F/G, 6-5/Fr.; Chris Williams, F/G, 6-5/Fr.

Last league title: 1995 (tie).

Last time made NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Charlottesville, Va. **Home court:** University Hall (8,457).

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Ascending: Tennessee. Stud recruit Vincent Yarbrough provides more scoring, and center Charles Hathaway is healthy after battling a blood clot in his shoulder. Florida and LSU also are on the rise.

Descending: Mississippi. The Rebels are bound to suffer from losing coach Rob Evans to Arizona State and star player Ansu Sesay to the NBA. Evans' intensity was the common denominator of the "Miracle in Oxford": back-to-back SEC West titles.

Biggest sneakers to fill: Mississippi forward Ansu Sesay's. He meant so much to Ole Miss, more even than his averages of 18.6 points and 7.6 rebounds. There's no heir apparent on whom first-year coach Rod Barnes can call. Johnnie Rogers and Rahim Lockhart are two role players who must step up.

Most underrated player: Mississippi State guard Detrick White. Last year, he provided scoring (12.2), assists (a league-best 5.5) and tough defense while adding 4.9 rebounds.

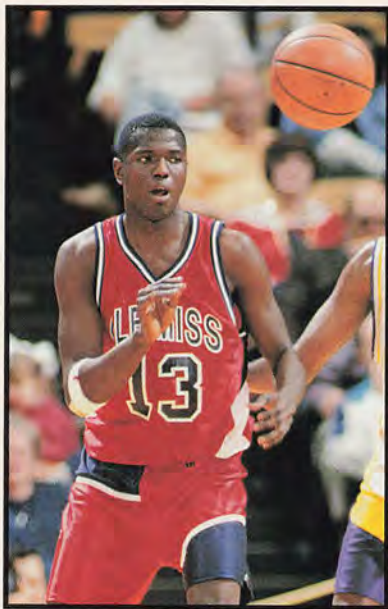
Most overrated player: Arkansas forward Derek Hood. He was a McDonald's All-American when Arkansas signed him in 1995 out of Kansas City, Mo. A three-year starter, Hood has been a decent rebounder, but he has yet to average in double-figures scoring. His points and boards fell off as a junior and must swing upward for the Razorbacks to return to prominence.

Coach on the hot seat: Ron Jirsa, Georgia. Jirsa's 20-15 maiden voyage as coach was painful, considering Tubby Smith left him with five starters and eight other veterans, along with star recruit Jumaine Jones. Georgia fans hope Jirsa rebounds in his second campaign, just as Jim Donnan did with the football Bulldogs last fall. Otherwise

Best bets: Sure to be needing their dancing shoes in March are Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas. Auburn and Georgia are possible bubble-busters. ... Tennessee will make it back to the SEC Tournament championship game for the first time since '91. Kentucky—who else?—will be waiting in the other bracket at the Georgia Dome. ... The SEC's streak of having a team in the NCAA title game will come to an end after five consecutive seasons. ... BJ McKie will surpass Alex English as South Carolina's career scoring leader. McKie is 354 points short.

Odds and ends: Auburn's Cliff Ellis (four years on the job) and Arkansas' Nolan Richardson (13 years) are the old-timers in the SEC West. John Brady qualifies as an upperclassman with one year on the job at LSU. Alabama, Ole Miss and Mississippi State are introducing new coaches. Mark Gottfried, fresh from Murray State, was the short-odds pick at Alabama, where he scored 1,056 points in the 1980s. Gottfried shouldn't have any trouble recognizing the new man at Ole Miss, Rod Barnes. Barnes' 1,201-point career as a Rebels backcourt star overlapped with Gottfried's stint as a shooting guard for the Crimson Tide. Mississippi State bumped up the top assistant when Richard Williams called it quits after 12 years. Rick Stansbury was a popular choice with the Bulldogs.

—MIKE STRANGE



Ole Miss will struggle unless Rogers (above) helps fill the void left by Sesay's departure.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. Florida (F/G Mike Miller). Coach Billy Donovan brought in a pair of McDonald's All-Americans in Ted Dupay and Miller, a 6-8 swingman from South Dakota who picked the Gators over Kansas and Kentucky. The 5-9 Dupay, whose deadly shooting helped him earn Florida's Mr. Basketball honors, is the most prolific prep scorer in state history. Shooting guard LaDarius Halton is a terrific 6-3 athlete who can bomb from the perimeter and attack the rim. He scored 76 points in a game last season. Look out for 6-7 center Udonis Haslem, a 274-pound load who possesses a nice touch.
2. LSU (F Stromile Swift).
3. Auburn (F Chris Porter).
4. Kentucky (F Tayshaun Prince).
5. Arkansas (G Brandon Dean).
6. South Carolina (F Damien Kinloch).
7. Ole Miss (F Marcus Hicks).
8. Tennessee (F Vincent Yarbrough).
9. Georgia (G D.A. Layne).
10. Alabama (F Sam Haginas).
11. Mississippi State (G Joe Marshall).
12. Vanderbilt (G Deandre Moore).

BY BOB HOLT
Arkansas Gazette
AND MIKE STRANGE
Knoxville (Tenn.) News-Sentinel

PREDICTIONS

EAST
DIVISION

1. Kentucky
2. Tennessee
3. Georgia
4. South Carolina
5. Florida
6. Vanderbilt

WEST
DIVISION

1. Arkansas
2. Auburn
3. Mississippi
4. Mississippi St.
5. Alabama
6. LSU

ALL-SEC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	JUMAINE JONES, Georgia	6-7/210	Soph.
F	SCOTT PADGETT, Kentucky	6-9/240	Sr.
C	TYRONE WASHINGTON, Mississippi State	6-10/260	Sr.
G	TONY HARRIS, Tennessee	6-0/165	Soph.
G	BJ MCKIE, South Carolina	6-2/190	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	C.J. BLACK, Tennessee	6-8/250	Jr.
F	HESHIMU EVANS, Kentucky	6-6/210	Sr.
F/G	BRYANT SMITH, Auburn	6-5/195	Sr.
G	BRANDON WHARTON, Tennessee	6-3/190	Sr.
G	BRIAN WILLIAMS, Alabama	6-1/193	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BJ McKie, G, South Carolina



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

MIKE MILLER, F/G, FLORIDA

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Kenyan Weaks, Florida.
Best rebounder: Tyrone Washington, Mississippi State.
Best playmaker: Detrick White, Mississippi State.
Best defender: Wayne Turner, Kentucky.
Best leaper: Vegas Davis, Tennessee.
Most versatile: Antonio Grant, South Carolina.
Most flamboyant: Kareem Reid, Arkansas.
Best NBA prospect: Jumaine Jones, Georgia.



EASTERN DIVISION

1. KENTUCKY

Frontcourt: Two years ago, nobody tabbed Nazr Mohammed as a guy who would leave early for the NBA, but he did just that even though he averaged only 21 minutes in Kentucky's NCAA championship run. His production and rapid development were enough of an impetus for him to leave. Jamaal Magloire and Michael Bradley should be capable of tag-teaming to take up the slack. If Magloire matures from a sophomore slump—and he showed signs of emerging in the postseason—he could be one of the league's most intimidating defensive post players. Bradley, whose minutes should increase dramatically as a sophomore, is the offensive and passing complement to Magloire's defense. Scott Padgett, who has been named to the all-tournament team at the Final Four each of the past two seasons, creates a mismatch at power forward with his ability to post up and step out and nail the 3-pointer. Soft hands make Padgett, an excellent free-throw shooter, a natural to play small forward if coach Tubby Smith wants to go big. Heshimu Evans, one of last year's pleasant surprises after transferring from Manhattan, is penciled in at small forward. He's a tenacious defender and an emotional leader who lives up to his name—it translates to "strong warrior" in Swahili—and has improved his shot. But Evans could throw his hat in the derby for the shooting guard spot. Myron Anthony and freshman Souleymane "Jules" Camara, a native of Senegal who has played just four years of organized basketball, provide depth inside. Another freshman, McDonald's All-American Tayshaun Prince, should see considerable minutes at small forward, but he needs to add muscle. The long and lean Prince, who averaged 22 points and 9.8 rebounds for Dominguez High in Compton, Calif., last season, is one of the most heralded freshmen in the nation and could be an instant hit.

Backcourt: Few guards could match Wayne Turner's postseason credentials, as he has ended each of his first three seasons playing in the NCAA championship game, winning two of them. Best known as a defender, Turner's offensive game has improved each year. He boosted his biggest weakness, 3-point shooting, by 10 percent last year, climbing to 36.8 percent. He's a deadly penetrator who could improve his finishing skills and free-throw shooting (a career 59.3-percent shooter). The enduring question is what will happen at the two-guard spot, where Jeff Sheppard became such a clutch performer? The candidates are many. Seldom-seen sophomore Ryan Hogan, who needs to improve his defense, could become a Cameron Mills-type relief shooter. Saul Smith, the son of the coach, could earn minutes if his shot becomes more consistent. Evans, Prince and another freshman, Desmond Allison, also are possibilities. Allison doesn't shoot as well as Prince, who has been compared to Indiana Pacers star Reggie Miller, but is a terrific athlete. Freshmen Todd Tackett, who originally committed to Clemson, and J.P. Blevins could develop into role players as the year unfolds.

Keys to success: Magloire and/or Bradley must evolve from a supporting to a leading role in the middle. Padgett must assume some of Sheppard's burden of taking the clutch shot, as well as his sense of leadership. At least one freshman needs to hit the floor shooting.

Outlook: The non-conference schedule is a minefield, with Duke, Kansas, Maryland, Indiana, Georgia Tech, Louisville and Miami (Fla.) looming. Plus, Tennessee is a rising force in the SEC East. Still, after last year's totally unexpected NCAA championship, this is a Kentucky team brimming with confidence. Tubby Smith has vindicated what already was widely suspected, that he's one heck of a coach. The Wildcats, who are trying to become the first repeat national champions since Duke in 1991 and '92, again could be among the last teams standing as March winds down. If not for an overtime loss to Arizona in the 1997 national title game, Kentucky would be gunning for its fourth consecutive NCAA crown.



One of the SEC's best post defenders, Magloire—whose offensive skills are minimal—needs to evolve from a supporting to a leading role.

Wildcats Data

Coach: Tubby Smith (35-4, 1 year; 159-66 overall, 7 years; 12-4 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in '98).

1997-98 record: 35-4. SEC East: 14-2/1st. Beat Utah in NCAA final.

Starters lost (3): Allen Edwards, G/F (9.2 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 3.3 apg, 1.1 spg, 25.4 mpg); Nazr Mohammed, C (12.0 ppg, 7.2 rpg, 59.7 FG%, 1.9 bpg, 21.0 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Jeff Sheppard, G (13.7 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 70.3 FT%, 37.6 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 28.0 mpg).

Others lost: Cameron Mills, G (4.4 ppg, 95.7 FT%, 43.7 3-pt%, 11.2 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Scott Padgett, F, 6-9/Sr. (11.5 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 85.3 FT%, 1.3 spg, 27.9 mpg); Wayne Turner, G, 6-2/Sr. (9.3 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 4.4 apg, 1.6 spg, 28.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Myron Anthony, F, 6-7/Soph.; Michael Bradley, F/C, 6-10/Soph.; Heshimu Evans, F, 6-6/Sr. (8.8 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 53.6 FG%, 35.3 3-pt%, 20.5 mpg); Ryan Hogan, G, 6-3/Soph.; Jamaal Magloire, C, 6-10/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 48.7 FG%, 1.7 bpg, 14.9 mpg); Steve Masiello, G, 6-2/Jr.; Saul Smith, G, 6-2/Soph. (13.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Desmond Allison, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; J.P. Blevins, G, 6-2/Fr.; Souleymane "Jules" Camara, F, 6-11/Fr.; Tayshaun Prince, F/G, 6-7/Fr.; Todd Tackett, G, 6-2/Fr.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1991.

Site: Lexington, Ky. **Home court:** Rupp Arena (23,000).

2. TENNESSEE

Frontcourt: Charles Hathaway's return gives Tennessee the league's best inside rotation. That the Vols were able to win 20 games last year despite losing the big, athletic sophomore after five games to a blood-clot problem in a shoulder was a testament to C.J. Black's toughness and presence on both ends of the court. Black, a wide-body lefty who has established himself as one of the SEC's top scoring threats, led the league in blocks en route to setting a school single-season record with 73. Black, who could emerge as a first-team All-SEC player, also paced the Volunteers in rebounding with a 6.8 average. With Hathaway back at Black's side, the Vols don't have to back off from anybody physically. Hathaway, who led the Vols in rebounding as a freshman in 1996-97, provides an intimidating presence in the paint. Lithe Isiah Victor, a terrific athlete who boasts tremendous quickness, can contribute needed offense. Torrey Harris, a senior who is the most experienced player on the front line with 57 starts to his credit, is a tireless defensive nuisance who usually draws the assignment of guarding the opposition's top interior threat. Rashard Lee blossomed at small forward last year under new coach Jerry Green. But Lee's minutes are sure to suffer with the arrival of McDonald's All-American Vincent Yarbrough, considered by many to be one of the best-ever players to be produced in the state of Tennessee. The latest in a line of in-state prep stars to stay home—including Tony Harris, Brandon Wharton, Black and Hathaway—Yarbrough might be an instant starter and will bring scoring and passing skills to the wing. He earned Class AAA Mr. Basketball honors in Tennessee last season en route to averaging 24 points, 14 rebounds, seven assists and five blocks for Cleveland High.

Backcourt: If Wharton, who led Tennessee in scoring for the second consecutive season last year, picks up where he left off last March, he'll be second to only BJ McKie as the league's best guard. A career 41.8-percent 3-point shooter, Wharton finally has settled into a comfortable chemistry with backcourt mate Tony Harris, a point guard with a scorer's mentality. As a rookie, Harris brought badly needed sizzle to Tennessee's new up-tempo game. There's not a quicker player in the league. But he has to stay under control to be effective. His spotty shooting (36.6 percent) should improve as a sophomore. Together, Harris and Wharton, who last season moved from the point to off-guard to accommodate Harris, make the Vols almost press-proof. The Wharton-Harris tandem averaged 29.4 points last season, second only to South Carolina's duo of Melvin Watson and McKie. Depth is a concern. Aaron Green is a proven role player, a status Del Baker—Yarbrough's brother—needs to earn. Green, whose hustling style endears him to fans, is a potent perimeter scoring threat who boasts a long-range shot and a soft touch. Vegas Davis, one of the team's best shooters, needs to bring his ball-handling up to par with his defense and leaping ability.

Keys to success: With the Green era focus shifted to high-octane offense, the Vols have to remember to play tough defense. The maturation of Tony Harris as a floor general must continue for Tennessee—which last year recorded its first 20-win season since 1984-85, its first winning record since 1991-92 and its first NCAA appearance since 1988-89—to reach its potential and win its first NCAA game since the 1982-83 season. Tennessee will receive an early-season test when it plays Arizona in the Black Coaches Association Classic. Non-league games with Miami (Ohio), St. Joseph's and Memphis also will be challenging.

Outlook: The addition of a player of Yarbrough's caliber and a healthy Hathaway should make the Vols a national breakthrough team. Advancing to the Sweet 16 (or higher) should be the goal.



Tony Harris must continue to mature as a floor general for the Volunteers to reach their potential and win an NCAA game for the first time since 1983.

Volunteers Data

Coach: Jerry Green (20-9, 1 year; 242-187 overall, 15 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-9. SEC East: 9-7/3rd. Lost to Illinois State in NCAA West first round.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: DaShay Jones, G (7.7 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 52.4 FG%, 19.3 mpg); Scott Moore, C (46.7 FG%; transfer/Cumberland College).

Starters returning (5): C.J. Black, F, 6-8/Jr. (12.6 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 51.9 FG%, 74.1 FT%, 41.7 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 2.5 bpg, 28.6 mpg); Tony Harris, G, 6-0/Soph. (14.2 ppg, 72.0 FT%, 4.2 apg, 1.3 spg, 31.2 mpg); Torrey Harris, F, 6-10/Sr. (4.8 rpg, 51.2 FG%, 20.8 mpg); Rashard Lee, F, 6-6/Sr. (10.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 41.8 3-pt%, 22.8 mpg); Brandon Wharton, G, 6-3/Sr. (15.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 72.4 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.4 spg, 34.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Del Baker, G, 6-4/Soph.; Vegas Davis, G, 6-3/Jr. (6.2 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 43.5 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 19.7 mpg); Aaron Green, G, 6-2/Sr. (4.3 ppg, 14.1 mpg); Charles Hathaway, C, 6-10/Soph. (RS/shoulder); Isiah Victor, F, 6-9/Soph. (7.7 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 50.7 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 20.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Vincent Yarbrough, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1989.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Knoxville, Tenn. **Home court:** Thompson-Boling Arena (24,535).

JAY COFIELD / SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

3. GEORGIA

Frontcourt: Unlikely as it may sound, Georgia's biggest loss is a football player—Larry Brown. When his season at tight end was over, Brown would give the Bulldogs an active presence in the paint that isn't likely to be replaced. The good news is Jumaine Jones will wage an SEC player of the year campaign from his for-



After a disappointing junior season, Chadwick looks to finish with a bang.

ward spot. The league's best freshman a year ago might be its best player as a sophomore. Jones can score inside or out, rebound, and shoots 78.5 percent at the line. The biggest improvement Jones can make is being more consistent and having confidence in his ability to be physical. Michael Chadwick returns at small forward, hoping his senior year bears no fallout from his junior struggles. There's a gaping hole at center, where a pair of 7-footers, Robb Dryden and Eric DeYoung, need to prove they can play at an SEC level. Dryden failed to live up to expectations last year. DeYoung, who was redshirted, now gets his chance. Badi Oliver, who seldom scores, is another member of the suspect post committee.

Backcourt: It seems G.G. Smith and Ray Harrison have been around forever. Smith turned in a solid year at point guard last season while most of his veteran teammates were in the tank at one point or another. Harrison struggled miserably (17.4 percent on 3-pointers) during SEC play. Both are among the league's best free-throw shooters, an advantage for protecting late leads. With Adrian Jones so injury-prone, depth will have to come from freshmen Shawn Fields and D.A. Layne.

Keys to success: It's almost a given that Jones will be terrific and Smith will be dependable. Chadwick and Harrison must go out strong. Coach Ron Jirsa could sure use a pleasant surprise in the post. Only woeful LSU shot the ball more poorly than the 'Dogs last year, so Georgia's veterans have to play like veterans and make some shots.

Outlook: Jirsa has toned down the non-conference schedule. Still, come January, it's hard to see Georgia any higher than third in the SEC East. Making the NCAA Tournament bubble is doable, but skeptics outnumber believers.

Bulldogs Data

Coach: Ron Jirsa (20-15, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 20-15. SEC East: 7-9/T4th. Lost to Penn State in NIT semifinals.

Starters lost (1): Larry Brown, F/C (6.3 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 46.2 FG%, 77.9 FT%, 17.9 mpg).

Others lost: Derrick Dukes, F (7.3 ppg, 35.3 3-pt%, 12.6 mpg); Lorenzo Hall, C (4.6 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 53.9 FG%, 15.0 mpg); Phenizee Ransom, G/F (3.1 rpg, 14.3 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Michael Chadwick, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (8.7 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 25.3 mpg); Ray Harrison, G, 6-3/Sr. (11.9 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 73.9 FT%, 3.6 apg, 1.5 spg, 33.3 mpg); Jumaine Jones, F, 6-7/Soph. (14.7 ppg, 8.5 rpg, 45.3 FG%, 78.5 FT%, 35.5 3-pt%, 29.5 mpg); G.G. Smith, G, 5-11/Sr. (13.5 ppg, 77.7 FT%, 43.6 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.3 spg, 34.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Eric DeYoung, C, 7-0/Sr. (RS); Robb Dryden, C, 7-1/Soph.; Adrian Jones, G, 6-5/Jr.; Jon Nordin, F, 6-8/Sr. (72.2 FT%, 39.4 3-pt%); Badi Oliver, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (10.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Shawn Fields, G, 6-3/Fr.; D.A. Layne, G, 6-1/Fr.; Ryan Lewis, F, 6-9/Fr.

Last league title: 1990.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Athens, Ga. **Home court:** Stegeman Coliseum (10,523).

4. SOUTH CAROLINA

Frontcourt: Now that Ryan Stack has gone on to the NBA, the fact that neither Bud Johnson nor William Gallman has displayed much scoring spark is more of a problem. Both are good defenders, which is what coach Eddie Fogler would like to see more of from LeRon Williams. Williams was a valuable scorer and offensive rebounder off the bench last year after transferring from Florida, but he seldom seems to apply the same effort at the other end of the court. Tony Kitchings is the center of the future, but the 260-pound freshman likely faces a year of adjustment while backing up Johnson. Fogler is excited about throwing freshman forward Damien Kinloch into the mix. Kinloch isn't polished, but his physical effort will earn him minutes. Antonio Grant, who made the SEC All-Freshman team at small forward, won two games with last-second baskets. Grant can shoot the 3-pointer, and Fogler is comfortable having him defend any position on the perimeter.

Backcourt: Surprising some SEC observers, BJ McKie is back for his senior season. His presence alone is enough to avoid predicting a dire descent for the Gamecocks, who won the division two years ago and finished second last season. McKie will get ample chance to polish his point-guard skills for the NBA now that Melvin Watson is gone. The likely rotation will pair McKie with freshman Aaron Lucas and junior Herbert Lee Davis, who was a disappointing marksman last year but has talent. Lucas is a good-looking prospect who can play both guard spots. Another freshman, Jamel Bradley, could improve the Gamecocks' 3-point shooting, which was 33.3 percent last year. Defensive ace Recus Nix and Hagen Rouse can be counted on for a few minutes off the bench.

Keys to success: The frontcourt has to improve its scoring punch now that Watson isn't around to complement McKie. Watson and Stack were double-figures scorers, so players such as Gallman, Grant and Davis need to step up and take pressure off McKie.

Outlook: A solid recruiting class should

blend in under McKie's leadership to keep the Gamecocks on the NCAA Tournament bubble and give them a chance at redemption for back-to-back first-round NCAA upsets to Coppin State and Richmond.

Gamecocks Data

Coach: Eddie Fogler (85-64, 5 years; 227-144 overall, 12 years; 2-6 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 23-8. SEC East: 11-5/2nd. Lost to Richmond in NCAA East first round.

Starters lost (2): Ryan Stack, F/C, (9.6 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 70.8 FT%, 1.8 bpg, 29.8 mpg); Melvin Watson, G (11.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 76.5 FT%, 35.0 3-pt%, 4.7 apg, 1.8 spg, 32.1 mpg).

Others lost: George Formanek, F/C.

Starters returning (3): William Gallman, F, 6-7/Sr. (5.9 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 21.3 mpg); Antonio Grant, F, 6-5/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 23.6 mpg); BJ McKie, G, 6-2/Sr. (18.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 78.2 FT%, 41.5 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.3 spg, 33.1 mpg).



McKie's presence is enough for the Gamecocks to avoid a dire descent.

Other returnees: Herbert Lee Davis, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (4.8 ppg, 15.8 mpg); Bud Johnson, C/F, 6-10/Sr. (52.8 FG%, 11.8 mpg); Recus Nix, G, 6-3/Sr. (71.4 FT%, 9.3 mpg); Hagen Rouse, G, 6-3/Jr. (79.2 FT%); LeRon Williams, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 57.2 FG%, 19.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jamel Bradley, G, 6-2/Fr.; Damien Kinloch, F, 6-7/Fr.; Tony Kitchings, C, 6-10/Fr.; Aaron Lucas, G, 5-11/Fr.

Last league title: 1997.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Columbia, S.C. **Home court:** Frank McKuire Arena (12,401).

5. FLORIDA

Frontcourt: The Gators aren't likely to shift emphasis from the perimeter, as the cast in the paint is suspect. With the departure of Damen Maddox, the starting center job falls to Obiora Nnaji, the former African soccer player who still is learning to play with his hands. Nnaji runs the court well for 6-11, a necessity in Billy Donovan's scheme, but is foul-prone and mechanical. Holdover Greg Cristell will be pushed for reserve time by 274-pound freshman Udonis Haslem. Forward Brent Wright had moments as a freshman but tailed off. Greg Stolt, a returning starter, will supply a lethal dose of spot-up shooting and extend defenses, but he is a liability on the boards. There is better news at small forward—maybe. Kenyan Weaks emerged as the league's top 3-point marksman last season (50.8 percent), but he is suspended for off-court troubles for at least the first semester; if he doesn't come back, the Gators are in trouble. McDonald's All-American Mike Miller, a product of Mitchell (S.D.) High, is one of several impact recruits. Miller should fit well into Donovan's run-and-gun scheme.

Backcourt: Senior Eddie Shannon has been a steady plugger, handling playmaking and off-guard duties as needed, depending on whether Jason Williams was on the court or in the doghouse. The spectacular Williams took his troubled resume to the NBA a year early, but the O'Connell Center won't be without crowd-pleasing guard play. Shannon again will have to be flexible because of the arrival of two freshmen with mind-boggling prep stats. Ted Dupay, a McDonald's All-American, led the nation in scoring at 41.5 points per game at Mariner High in Cape Coral, Fla. But his 70-point outing didn't even take single-game state honors last year. LaDarius Halton scored 76 one night and averaged 32.9 at New Smyrna Beach (Fla.) High. Halton is a quintessential off-guard, while Dupay might win a starting job at either backcourt slot. Bottom line: Florida will be a threat to repeat as the Division I national leader in 3-point production (9.83 per game last year).

Keys to success: Florida's inside game has to provide more help. The Gators lost seven of their last eight in '97-98 after Jason Williams was booted from the team. At least three of the four heralded freshmen must make meaningful contributions.

Outlook: Gung-ho recruiter Donovan keeps increasing the talent pool and has Florida on its way out of the SEC East cellar. A winning season and another NIT bid are steppingstones on the way to bigger things next season.

Gators Data

Coach: Billy Donovan (27-32, 2 years; 62-52 overall, 4 years).
1997-98 record: 14-15. SEC East: 6-10/6th. Lost to Georgetown in NIT first round.
Starters lost (2): Damen Maddox, C (6.1 ppg, 5.4 rpg,



Stolt is a deadly shooter who can extend defenses, but he's a weak rebounder.

57.4 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 17.3 mpg); Jason Williams, G (17.1 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 84.0 FT%, 40.3 3-pt%, 6.7 apg, 2.7 spg, 31.8 mpg; declared for NBA draft).

Others lost: Jamaal Horton, G (5.7 ppg, 40.4 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 12.5 mpg; left school); Eddie Nunez, G; Dan Williams, G (4.9 ppg, 85.7 FT%, 21.6 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Eddie Shannon, G, 5-11/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 4.2 apg, 1.8 spg, 34.8 mpg); Greg Stolt, F, 6-8/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 46.0 FG%, 79.7 FT%, 45.8 3-pt%, 1.1 bpg, 27.7 mpg); Kenyan Weaks, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (12.7 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 51.3 FG%, 78.8 FT%, 50.8 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 25.3 mpg; suspended for at least the first semester).

Other returnees: Greg Cristell, C, 6-9/Jr. (56.0 FG%); Obiora Nnaji, C, 6-11/Jr. (3.5 rpg, 49.4 FG%, 12.5 mpg); Major Parker, F, 6-3/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 15.0 mpg); Brent Wright, F, 6-7/Soph. (7.4 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 36.2 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 21.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Ted Dupay, G, 5-9/Fr.; LaDarius Halton, G, 6-3/Fr.; Udonis Haslem, C, 6-7/Fr.; Mike Miller, F/G, 6-8/Fr.

Last league title: 1994.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Gainesville, Fla. **Home court:** O'Connell Center (12,000).

6. VANDERBILT

Frontcourt: Austin Bates and Billy Di Spaltro were the guts of Vandy's inside game. Neither was flashy, but they combined for 25.6 points and 11.2 rebounds, and each hit better than 50 percent from the field. The likely solution is sliding Greg LaPointe, a banger, from power forward to center and lanky Dan Langhi from facing the basket to power forward. LaPointe produced four double-digit games down the stretch to make the SEC All-Freshman team. Langhi averaged

15.3 points and 6.3 rebounds in the last four games while playing power forward in place of the injured Di Spaltro. Anthony Williams had a rep as a big-time high-school rebounder—a red-flag concern for the 'Dores—but was only a bit player as a freshman. Maybe this year he'll help Vandy avoid the distinction of being the league's only team with an overall rebounding deficit. Darius Coulibaly, a 7-footer from the Ivory Coast, is intriguing. After a redshirt year, he might offer spot help as a shot blocker. A newcomer of more serious impact is small forward Michael LeBlanc, a transfer from Connecticut who has designs on incumbent Vince Ford's starting job.

Backcourt: Junior Atiba Prater is a competent SEC point guard, though not a marksman. The staff is anxious to see freshman Deandre Moore, a sleeper from Compton, Calif. If the two occasionally play together, it might be the quickest Vandy backcourt ever. James Strong would like to replace four-year starter Drew Maddux at shooting guard but will have to hold off redshirt freshman Sam Howard. Often compared to Maddux, Howard played at the same Nashville prep school as Maddux, but is more athletic than his mentor and can create his own shot.

Keys to success: Get on the boards. This team could be more athletic than its predecessor, and coach Jan van Breda Kolff hopes it shows on the glass. Langhi needs to score and hold his own in the paint. And someone needs to step up in Maddux's place to take the big shots with confidence.

Outlook: Replacing war horses Maddux, Bates and Di Spaltro won't be easy. On the other hand, Vandy didn't finish strong last year and might be ready for fresh leadership. With Tennessee and Florida on the rise, the Commodores could get left behind unless LeBlanc and Howard have a big impact.

Commodores Data

Coach: Jan van Breda Kolff (90-66, 5 years; 113-95 overall, 7 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-13. SEC East: 7-9/T4th. Lost to Georgia in NIT third round.

Starters lost (3): Austin Bates, C/F (13.8 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 27.3 mpg); Billy Di Spaltro, F (11.8 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 81.3 FT%, 1.3 spg, 25.5 mpg); Drew Maddux, G (16.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 75.5 FT%, 36.4 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 2.1 spg, 35.9 mpg).

Others lost: Gianni Cugini, F/C.

Starters returning (2): Vince Ford, F/G, 6-4/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 35.3 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 24.2 mpg); Atiba Prater, G, 6-1/Jr. (8.9 ppg, 5.1 apg, 2.1 spg, 33.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Dan Langhi, F/C, 6-11/Jr. (6.3 ppg, 76.6 FT%, 15.9 mpg); Greg LaPointe, F, 6-9/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 47.7 FG%, 19.2 mpg); James Strong, G, 6-3/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 1.6 spg, 17.9 mpg); Anthony Williams, F, 6-7/Soph. (3.3 rpg, 10.3 mpg); Brian Williams, G, 6-1/Jr.

Top newcomers: Darius Coulibaly, C, 7-0/Fr. (RS); Sam Howard, G, 6-4/Fr. (RS); Michael LeBlanc, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Connecticut); Sam Lekwauwa, F, 6-7/Fr.; Deandre Moore, G, 5-10/Fr.; Iiro Tenngren, F, 6-8/Fr.

Last league title: 1993.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Nashville, Tenn. **Home court:** Memorial Gym (15,311).

WEST DIVISION

1. ARKANSAS

Frontcourt: Derek Hood, the SEC's leading rebounder two years ago, is a strong inside player and defender. With Nick Davis, last year's SEC rebounding champion with a 9.8 average, having moved on, Hood may be ready to again lead the conference. He must help replace Davis, who did it all for Arkansas last season. Improved shooting may help counter the loss of Davis, who led the Razorbacks in blocks and taking charges in addition to rebounding. But Hood needs to improve his jump shot and consistently hit from 12 to 15 feet to be an all-around player. Jason Jennings, the team's only true center, should be ready to step up, possibly as a starter, after adapting to the SEC last season. Senior forward Ali Thompson, who made an incredible recovery from knee surgery last season to play 20 games, is the team's best athlete and has been an extremely valuable sixth man. But like Hood, he needs to improve his outside shooting. Freshman Chris Jeffries, a good ballhandler and shooter who is comfortable on the perimeter as well as inside, is being counted on for immediate help.

Backcourt: Seniors Kareem Reid and Pat Bradley give Arkansas one of the most experienced guard tandems in the country, having started a combined 165 games. Reid, who needs 163 assists to break Lee Mayberry's school career record, is flashy, and he has reduced his mistakes while improving his shooting. Bradley, once strictly a jump shooter, has learned to drive to the hoop and create his own shot. In each of the past two seasons, he has led the SEC in 3-point field goals and the team in scoring. Arkansas should be a better shooting club, which will take pressure off Bradley, who has hit a school-record 273 3-pointers but was consistently hounded by defenders last season. Last year, the Razorbacks shot just 44.6 percent from the field, 35.3 percent from 3-point range and 64.8 percent from the line. Freshman Brandon Dean can play either guard spot and is talented enough that the Razorbacks may go with a three-guard lineup. Freshman Jason Gilbert gives the team another good outside shooter to go along with Bradley. Sophomore Brandon Davis is a good athlete, but he is still raw and needs to reduce his mistakes. But coach Nolan Richardson feels he can become a solid point guard. Junior walk-on Chris Walker is a solid backup, and freshman Sergerio Gipson should be able to help off the bench.



Reid, who figures to become Arkansas' career leader in assists this season, has reduced his mistakes while becoming a better shooter.

Keys to success: The freshmen, who should provide much better shooting than Arkansas has had the past two seasons, need to mesh with the seniors to allow Richardson to mix and match lineups the way he likes. Last year was the first in three that the Razorbacks were able to recruit without the shadow of an NCAA inquiry. The results have Richardson comparing this class with the Mayberry-Todd Day-Oliver Miller group that was signed in 1988. At least four of the freshmen figure to play significant roles and should add offensive punch, but it is as important that they develop defensively. The continued maturation of Jennings, who spent time at a big man's camp in the summer after working extensively with weights early in the offseason, also is critical.

Outlook: Arkansas, which won or shared the West title from 1992-95, should be back on top of the division this season and earn another NCAA Tournament berth. Richardson, who needs 12 victories to pass Glen Rose as the winningest coach in Arkansas history, should have his team tournament tough after playing a non-league schedule that features the likes of Oklahoma, Wake Forest, Providence and Memphis.

Razorbacks Data

Coach: Nolan Richardson (314-118, 13 years; 433-155 overall, 18 years; 25-12 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in '94).

1997-98 record: 24-9, SEC West: 11-5/2nd. Lost to Utah in NCAA West second round.

Starters lost (2): Nick Davis, C (10.4 ppg, 9.8 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 1.3 spg, 2.4 bpg, 26.7 mpg); Landis Williams, F (7.4 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 60.4 FG%, 70.6 FT%, 15.8 mpg).

Others lost: Sunday Adebayo, F (6.2 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 51.1 FG%, 15.2 mpg); Tarik Wallace, G (10.4 ppg, 72.2 FT%, 1.6 spg, 24.0 mpg); Guy Whitney, F.

Starters returning (3): Pat Bradley, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.8 ppg, 90.2 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 29.4 mpg); Derek Hood, F, 6-8/Sr. (8.4 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 50.2 FG%, 22.6 mpg); Kareem Reid, G, 5-10/Sr. (11.9 ppg, 73.9 FT%, 5.2 apg, 1.9 spg, 29.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Brandon Davis, G/F, 6-5/Soph.; Jason Jennings, C, 7-0/Soph. (4.7 ppg, 51.0 FG%, 9.9 mpg); Ali Thompson, F, 6-5/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 17.3 mpg); Chris Walker, G, 6-5/Jr. (11.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brandon Dean, G, 6-0/Fr.; Jason Gilbert, G, 5-11/Fr.; Sergerio Gipson, G/F, 6-3/Fr.; Dionisio Gomez, F, 6-8/Fr.; Justin Hankins, F, 6-7/Fr.; Chris Jeffries, F, 6-8/Fr.; Josh Smith, G, 6-5/Fr. (RS).

Last league title: 1995 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Fayetteville, Ark. **Home court:** Bud Walton Arena (19,200).

2. AUBURN

Frontcourt: Last season, senior Bryant Smith developed into one of the most versatile forwards in the SEC; he is the Tigers' best scorer, rebounder and defender. He has matured off the court as well, after being a discipline problem for coach Cliff Ellis earlier in his career. Chris Porter, a JC transfer, is expected to start at power forward and add toughness and maturity. Junior center Mamadou N'diaye, a good rebounder and shot blocker, continues to learn the game he has been playing for only a few years and appears ready to take on more of a role in the offense. Forward Randy Hughes, one of the SEC's better freshmen last season, was suspended late in the year and may miss the first few games this season, but he is expected back and will be a big help when he returns to the lineup. Adrian Chilliast makes up for his lack of size with a tremendous work ethic. Keep an eye on freshman Mack McGadney, who was thought to be headed to Indiana.

Backcourt: Junior Doc Robinson is a take-charge point guard who knows how to run the team, and he also is a good scorer. Sophomore guard Scott Pohlman is a returning starter and reliable shooter who was the most pleasant surprise on the team last season, and junior Daymeon Fishback is a streaky shooter with size who can score in bunches off the bench. Freshmen Jay Heard, regarded by some as the best off-guard in Alabama last year, and Corey Watkins, a disciplined player, may help off the bench, but they don't figure to see much playing time.

Key to success: N'diaye needs to develop into an all-around center and give the Tigers more low-post scoring to take pressure off Smith, Robinson and Pohlman.

Outlook: Auburn, which at times last season was down to seven scholarship players because of injuries and suspensions, has a full allotment of 13 scholarship players this year. There is enough experience and talent to earn the Tigers' first NCAA Tournament trip since 1988, when Chris Morris led Auburn's charge.

Tigers Data

Coach: Cliff Ellis (67-55, 4 years; 415-267 overall, 23 years; 3-5 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 16-14. SEC West: 7-9/3rd. Lost to Marquette in NIT second round.

Starters lost (1): Franklin Williams, F (7.4 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 25.3 mpg).

Others lost: Derek Caldwell, G (10.5 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Mamadou N'diaye, C, 7-0/Jr. (8.0 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 2.4 bpg, 24.9 mpg); Scott Pohlman, G, 6-2/Soph. (10.6 ppg, 83.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 29.6 mpg); Doc Robinson, G, 6-2/Jr. (12.4 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 76.6 FT%, 4.4 apg, 1.2 spg, 32.1 mpg); Bryant Smith, F/G, 6-5/Sr. (13.3 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 50.6 FG%, 2.4 spg, 32.7 mpg).
Other returnees: Adrian Chilliast, F, 6-5/Sr. (3.5 rpg, 12.6 mpg); Daymeon Fishback, G, 6-5/Jr. (6.9 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 35.1 3-pt%, 20.8 mpg); Randy Hughes, F, 6-9/Soph. (7.1 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 1.8 bpg, 22.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: David Hamilton, F, 6-9/Fr.; Jay Heard, G, 6-3/Fr.; Mack McGadney, F, 6-7/Fr.; Chris Porter, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Reggie Sharp, G, 6-1/Soph. (transfer/West Georgia); Abe Smith, F, 6-7/Fr.; Corey Watkins, G, 6-2/Fr.
Last league title: 1960.

Last NCAA appearance: 1988.

Site: Auburn, Ala. **Home court:** Beard-Eaves Memorial Coliseum (10,108).

3. MISSISSIPPI

Frontcourt: The Rebels can't help but miss Ansu Sesay, the SEC Player of the Year, and inspirational leader Anthony Boone, but they still have talent inside. Jason Smith is one of the most physical players in the SEC and figures to carry more of a scoring and rebounding load. Smith, who has led Ole Miss in steals each of the past three years, would be even better with a consistent jumper. Freshman forward Darrian Brown has the talent to step in and start immediately. Senior forward Johnnie Rogers, a shot blocker and rebounder, and Rahim Lockhart, a wide body who is looking to improve as a sophomore, provide size and experience, but the Rebels can't count on them for much offense. Redshirt freshman center John Engstrom provides size (7-0) and depth after sitting out last season recovering from a knee injury. Jon Cantrell is one of the best shooters among big men in the SEC.

Backcourt: Senior Keith Carter could be the best shooting guard in the conference, but he can do a lot more than shoot. Carter, who played on the USA's gold medal team in the Goodwill Games, also is a strong rebounder who has improved on defense and will be counted on as a leader. He has started with point guard Michael White since the two were freshmen. White, who has paced the team in assists in each of the past three seasons, has proven he can run the team against more talented players, and he also can score when needed. Backup point guard Jason Flanigan, the younger brother of former Auburn standout Wes, needs to provide a lift off the bench and fill the sixth-man role with the departure of Joezon Darby. Flanigan made strides as a shooter and ballhandler in the offseason.

Key to success: Rod Barnes, promoted from assistant to coach when Rob Evans left to coach Arizona State, has to show he's ready to run an SEC team. Barnes, 32, played for Ole Miss from 1984-88.

Outlook: The Rebels have tough veterans in Carter, Smith and White, so this team won't sink back to the bottom of the conference with Evans and Sesay leaving. But with a rookie coach and the losses of Sesay, Boone and Darby, a third consecutive West title and NCAA Tournament bid appear out of reach.

Rebels Data

Coach: Rod Barnes (First year).

1997-98 record: 22-7. SEC West: 12-4/1st. Lost to Valparaiso in NCAA Midwest first round.

Starters lost (2): Ansu Sesay, F (18.6 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 72.7 FT%, 35.0 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 33.0 mpg); Anthony Boone, F (5.3 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 18.0 mpg).

Others lost: Joezon Darby, G (11.7 ppg, 25.0 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Keith Carter, G, 6-4/Sr. (14.8 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 49.0 FG%, 76.6 FT%, 37.2 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 31.0 mpg); Jason Smith, F, 6-6/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 47.2 FG%, 1.7 spg, 23.0 mpg); Michael White, G, 6-1/Sr. (5.4 ppg, 3.0 apg, 48.5 FG%, 77.3 FT%, 47.5

3-pt%, 24.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Michael Boone, F, 6-4/Jr.; Jon Cantrell, F, 6-8/Sr. (77.8 FT%, 42.5 3-pt%, 12.0 mpg); Hunter Carpenter, G, 6-0/Sr.; Jason Flanigan, G, 6-1/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 37.0 3-pt%, 15.0 mpg); Rahim Lockhart, F, 6-8/Soph. (3.1 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 10.0 mpg); Johnnie Rogers, F, 6-9/Sr. (47.6 FG%, 1.7 bpg, 10.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Darrian Brown, F, 6-6/Fr.; John Engstrom, C, 7-0/Fr. (RS/knee); Marcus Hicks, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Matt Pruitt, G, 6-4/Fr.; David Sanders, G, 6-3/Fr.; Syniker Taylor, G, 6-2/Fr.; Latary Williams, G/F, 6-6/Jr. (JC).
Last league title: 1998 (SEC West).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Oxford, Miss. **Home court:** Tad Smith Coliseum (8,135).

4. MISSISSIPPI ST.

Frontcourt: Tyrone Washington is the SEC's best center and one of the 20 best in the nation. At times last season, he took over games with his rebounding, defense and scoring. But at times, he also disappeared, even at 6-10. He can't afford any lulls in his play if MSU is to have a winning season; he must improve his intensity and concentration levels. Sophomore forward Tang Hamilton struggled much of last season but showed flashes of brilliance and figures to move into a starting role with the losses of Horatio Webster and Whit Hughes. Senior power forward Oral Roberts, a JC transfer who didn't do much last season, may be ready to help after a year of adjustment. If Roberts isn't up to the challenge, freshmen forwards Tyrus Boswell and Robert Jackson have to provide help. Boswell will miss at least the first semester.

Backcourt: If all of Mississippi State's newcomers had played as well as JC transfer Detrick White last season, the Bulldogs might have gone to the NCAA Tournament instead of finishing with a .500 record. White is a point guard who can score and rebound and should be one of the SEC's top players this year. Senior guard Bart Hyche is the team's best 3-point shooter but will be challenged for a starting job by junior Todd Myles, a former JC transfer. Myles, who started at times last year, needs to be more offensive-minded. He sometimes didn't shoot when the coaches wanted him to fire away. Sophomore Joe Marshall, a JC transfer, should lend depth, and big things are expected from redshirt freshman Marckell Patterson.

Keys to success: Washington must play well every minute of every game, not just sometimes. Mississippi State is relying on its newcomers to contribute major minutes this season, which always is a dicey proposition.

Outlook: It's hard to predict how the Bulldogs will fare under first-year coach Rick Stansbury, who takes over for Richard Williams, the winningest coach in school history. Stansbury is familiar to the players after having been an MSU assistant the previous eight years and is more personable than Williams. If the team can turn around some of the close losses suffered last year (including three in overtime), a winning record and the school's first postseason appearance since it advanced to the Final Four in 1996 are possible.

Bulldogs Data

Coach: Rick Stansbury (first year).

1997-98 record: 15-15. SEC West: 4-12/5th.

Starters lost (2): Whit Hughes, F (37.8 3-pt%, 21.4 mpg); Horatio Webster, F (17.0 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 1.0 spg, 33.5 mpg).

Others lost: Derrick Jones, F/G (9.1 mpg; transfer/Samford); Trey Moore, G (8.1 ppg, 74.2 FT%, 21.3 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Bart Hyche, G, 5-11/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 71.1 FT%, 14.8 mpg); Tyrone Washington, C, 6-10/Sr. (12.9 ppg, 9.3 rpg, 53.1 FG%, 2.1 bpg, 32.4 mpg); Detrick White, G, 6-1/Sr. (12.2 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 5.5 apg, 1.6 spg, 33.4 mpg).

Other returnees: T.J. Billups, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (RS/experience); Tang Hamilton, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 14.6 mpg); Todd Myles, G, 6-4/Jr. (19.5 mpg); Oral Roberts, F/C, 6-7/Sr. (3.3 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 12.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Tyrus Boswell, F, 6-7/Fr. (will miss at least the first semester because of academics); Michael Gholar, F/G, 6-5/Fr.; Robert Jackson, F/C, 6-8/Fr.; Joe Marshall, G, 6-2/Soph. (JC); Marckell Patterson, G, 6-5/Fr. (RS).

Last league title: 1996 (West Division).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Starkville, Miss. **Home court:** Humphrey Coliseum (10,500).

5. ALABAMA

Frontcourt: Jeremy Hays could be a big-time center if he continues to play as he did late last season, when he averaged 14 points and 12 rebounds in the Tide's last six games. He has developed a nice jump hook to make him more dangerous around the basket and also is a shot-blocking presence in the middle. Neil Ashby, a sophomore nicknamed "Grasshopper" because of 36-inch vertical jump, is a gifted athlete who may be ready to leap into a starting role with the loss of Demetrius Alexander. MC Mazique has size but can't be counted on to play a key role. Forward Mark Kimbrough, the all-time leading scorer at Pensacola (Fla.) Junior College, and freshman Sam Haginas, Mr. Basketball in Alabama last season, are the best of the newcomers.

Backcourt: Guard Brian Williams can be an explosive scorer, but he is an inconsistent shooter who is capable of taking his team down as well as carrying it. Chauncey Jones, a senior who arrived last year as a touted JC transfer, is a solid point guard who started last season. Sophomore Tarik London is a capable backup at the point. Sophomore shooting guard Terrance "Doc" Martin is coming back from a knee injury, but he could see quality minutes if healthy. Senior Chris Rollins missed most of last season with a wrist injury but could help off the bench.

Key to success: Alabama isn't a good shooting team, so it's vital the Tide be able to execute a transition offense in order to score enough points to give itself a chance to win.

Outlook: First-year coach Mark Gottfried, a senior on the Tide's 1986-87 team that won the SEC regular-season and tournament titles while advancing to the Sweet 16, has taken over for David Hobbs. Gottfried's arrival has sparked interest in hoops, as fans hope the 34-year-old can return Bama to the success it enjoyed when he helped lead the school to three Sweet 16 appearances and a school-best



Williams is capable of taking his team down as well as carry it with his streaky shooting.

28-5 mark as a senior. Gottfried, who took Murray State to two NCAA tournaments in three seasons as coach, has found the talent level in Tuscaloosa has fallen since his playing days. But this team has enough ability to secure a winning record and NIT bid.

Crimson Tide Data

Coach: Mark Gottfried (First year; 68-24 overall, 3 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-16. SEC West: 6-10/4th.

Starters lost (2): Demetrius Alexander, F (12.5 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 46.2 FG%, 78.4 FT%, 1.1 spg, 1.2 bpg, 31.1 mpg); Damon Bacote, G (11.7 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 35.1 3-pt%, 28.9 mpg).

Others lost: Blake Thrasher, G (9.9 mpg; left team).

Starters returning (3): Jeremy Hays, C, 6-10/Jr. (9.3 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 70.7 FT%, 1.1 spg, 1.8 bpg, 28.7 mpg); Chauncey Jones, G, 6-1/Sr. (9.9 ppg, 3.5 apg, 1.3 spg, 29.6 mpg); Brian Williams, G, 6-1/Sr. (16.1 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 81.5 FT%, 1.1 spg, 34.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Neil Ashby, F, 6-8/Soph.; Tarik London, G, 6-1/Soph. (47.4 FG%, 75.0 FT%, 9.5 mpg); Terrance "Doc" Martin, G, 6-3/Soph. (45.0 3-pt%, 9.3 mpg); MC Mazique, F, 6-10/Sr.; Alfred Moss, C, 6-8/Soph.; Chris Rollins, G, 6-5/Sr. (11.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Sam Haginas, F, 6-9/Fr.; Ray Johnston, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Mark Kimbrough, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Cedric Patton, F, 6-7/Fr.; Sam Williams, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS).

Last league title: 1987.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Tuscaloosa, Ala. **Home court:** Coleman Coliseum (15,043).

6. LSU

Frontcourt: The Tigers desperately need freshman Stromile Swift, a mega-recruit from Shreveport, La., in the lineup. He won't be academically eligible for the first semester but could be eligible for the second semester. Senior Cedric Carter, the Tigers' leading

rebounder in 1997-98, has SEC playing experience, but he's not a dynamic force. Jabari Smith, a JC transfer, figures to start at center and will need to step up big, especially if Swift can't play. Smith is needed to provide a defensive and shot-blocking presence in the paint. Brad Bridgewater and Marqus Ledoux, a pair of 6-8 freshmen, may be able to help off the bench.

Backcourt: Seniors Willie Anderson and Maurice Carter are survivors of coach John Brady's offseason roster purge and figure to be the Tigers' two most reliable scorers. Anderson is an athletic player who can shoot and get to the basket, and Carter, the team's top scorer last season, has improved his 3-point shooting. Jamaal Wolfe, a JC transfer, is the leading candidate to be the starting point guard.

Keys to success: This is a young team, so the backcourt duo of Anderson and Carter must provide a steady force. Hustle and hard work also are needed for this young squad to overcome the many mistakes it figures to commit. It's also imperative that Swift, a McDonald's All-American, become eligible.

Outlook: "The Brady Bunch" has a new cast, as five players from last year's club with eligibility remaining have left the team for one reason or another. That means LSU likely will post a sixth consecutive losing season. The influx of players may have increased the talent level, but roster turnover means the newcomers also need time to adjust to Brady's hard-nosed, disciplined style and to playing in the SEC. Brady's first LSU team played hard all season and lost several close games. If the crop of talented newcomers can play with the intensity and focus that Brady demands, the Tigers should be improved. The future will be even brighter if the player attrition ceases.

Tigers Data

Coach: John Brady (9-18, 1 year; 98-95 overall, 7 years).

1997-98 record: 9-18. SEC West: 2-14/6th.

Starters lost (3): DeJuan Collins, G (8.8 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 71.1 FT%, 35.9 3-pt%, 3.4 apg, 1.5 spg, 31.2 mpg; quit team); Louis Earl, F (3.0 rpg, 51.4 FG%, 13.1 mpg); Rogers Washington, F (9.2 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 27.7 mpg; academically ineligible).

Others lost: Rhodaria Caston, F (4.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 47.1 FG%, 17.7 mpg; dismissed); Chico Potts, G (10.3 mpg; quit team); Reggie Tucker, G (62.1 FG%, 19.7 mpg); Leroy Womack, F (quit team).

Starters returning (2): Willie Anderson, G, 6-4/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 71.2 FT%, 1.1 spg, 33.4 mpg); Maurice Carter, G, 6-4/Sr. (14.4 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 73.9 FT%, 32.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Cedric Carter, F, 6-7/Sr. (8.1 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 56.2 FG%, 22.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brian Beshara, F, 6-8/Soph. (transfer/Rice); Brad Bridgewater, F, 6-8/Fr.; Darryl Cooper, G, 6-2/Fr.; Brian Helquist, F, 6-9/Fr.; Marqus Ledoux, F, 6-8/Fr.; Omar Mance, G, 6-3/Fr.; Darryl Robbins, F, 6-6/Fr.; Jabari Smith, C, 6-11/Jr. (JC); Stromile Swift, F, 6-9/Fr. (academically ineligible for at least the first semester); Collis Temple III, G, 6-4/Fr.; Jermaine Williams, F, 6-6/Fr.; Jamaal Wolfe, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC).12

Last league title: 1991 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1993.

Site: Baton Rouge, La. **Home court:** Pete Maravich Assembly Center (14,164).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: St. Bonaventure. OK, so the weather stinks in Olean, N.Y., and there aren't too many direct flights from Olean to, well, anywhere. But somehow, St. Bonaventure alum Jim Baron has led his alma mater to a pair of NITs in the past four seasons and has a squad capable of contending for another this year. Center Caswell Cyrus is a force, and point guard Tim Winn is a dynamo.

Descending: Duquesne. Actually, the Dukes may have hit bottom, but it appears they won't get up for a while. New coach Darelle Porter, 28, is the youngest coach in Division I. He and his team are in for a long year.

Biggest sneakers to fill: St. Joseph's guard Rashid Bey's. Freshman point guard Larry Jennings steps in for Bey, who was the undisputed focal point of the Hawks for two years. All Bey did was run the team, lead the club in scoring, play excellent defense and handle the leadership responsibilities.

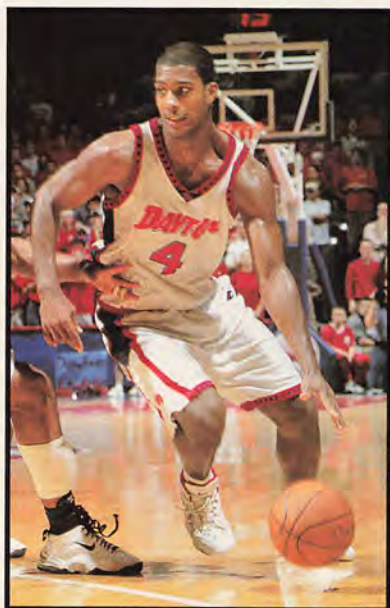
Most underrated player: UMass forward Mike Babul. He doesn't score much, but he may be the conference's best defender. He's physical, devoted and strong. And he'll never get a vote for the all-conference teams.

Most overrated player: George Washington F Patrick Ngongba. As a freshman, he was supposed to take some pressure off Alexander Koul, but failed to do so. Maybe he'll blossom under new coach Tom Penders, whose offensive style may spark Ngongba.

Coach on the hot seat: La Salle's Speedy Morris. For the second year in a row, this dubious distinction goes to Morris, who has had five consecutive losing campaigns and enters the final year of his contract looking over his shoulder. It's unfortunate that 6-8 recruit Rasual Butler didn't qualify academically, although he could still make it by the second semester. Morris must win now with what he has.

Best bets: The A-10 will have four teams make it to the NCAA Tournament and another four qualify for the NIT. ... New GW coach Tom Penders will have trouble maintaining his year-round tan during the Washington, D.C., winters, but at least he won't try to sneak out of any road losses without talking to the media, like a previous Colonials coach did. ... Temple coach John Chaney will dismiss the lofty preseason predictions for his team and colorfully bad-mouth each of his players, no matter how talented they are. ... Rhode Island forward Lamar Odom will show everybody he was worth the wait.

Odds and ends: Two new coaches debut in the A-10 this year. Penders takes over at George Washington (replacing Mike Jarvis, who is now at St. John's), and Darelle Porter is the new boss at Duquesne. Porter replaces Scott Edgar, who was fired after last season. ... How much will La Salle enjoy playing all of its home games at on-campus Hayman Center? Well, consider that the Explorers had to leave campus at 2 p.m. for 7:30 p.m. home games at the CoreStates Spectrum. La Salle would shoot around, then repair to a nearby hotel for a few hours, before returning to the arena for the game. ... Temple needs four wins to become just the sixth school in NCAA history to amass 1,500 wins (joining Kentucky, North Carolina, Kansas, St. John's and Duke). And Owls coach John Chaney needs 19 triumphs to reach 600 for his distinguished career. ... There is a general consensus throughout the league that the Atlantic 10 will be stronger this year than it ever has been.



TIMOTHY BOONE / ST. BONAVENTURE

Dayton's Coby Turner will be a key player as the Flyers look for frontcourt points.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. Rhode Island (F Lamar Odom). This is a deep, strong class that fills the Rams' perimeter needs. Odom is a superior talent who can play any one of four positions. He should prove to be worth the wait and may be good enough to earn All-American honors this season. Backcourt recruits Zach "brother of Stephon" Marbury and Tip Vinson have plenty of talent, and Tavorris Bell is a fine slasher from the wing.
2. Xavier (G/F Lloyd Price).
3. Temple (C Kevin Lyde).
4. St. Joseph's (C Damian Reid).
5. Virginia Tech (F Dennis Mims).
6. George Washington (F Jason Smith).
7. Dayton (F Nate Green).
8. St. Bonaventure (G/F Vidal Massiah).
9. La Salle (F Jermaine Peebles).
10. Massachusetts (C Anthony Oates).
11. Fordham (F Teremun Johnson).
12. Duquesne (F Wayne Smith).

By MICHAEL BRADLEY
Free-lance writer based in Philadelphia

PREDICTIONS

EAST DIVISION	WEST DIVISION
1. Temple	1. Xavier
2. Rhode Island	2. Geo. Washington
3. UMass	3. Dayton
4. St. Bonaventure	4. Virginia Tech
5. St. Joseph's	5. La Salle
6. Fordham	6. Duquesne

ALL-ATLANTIC 10

FIRST TEAM

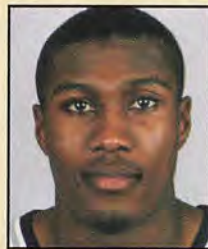
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
C	LARI KETNER, Massachusetts	6-10/268	Sr.
F	LAMAR ODOM, Rhode Island	6-10/220	Soph.
F	JAMES POSEY, Xavier	6-8/210	Sr.
G	LENNY BROWN, Xavier	6-2/198	Sr.
G	SHAWNITA ROGERS, George Washington	5-4/155	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	LAMONT BARNES, Temple	6-10/230	Jr.
F	YEGOR MESCHERIAKOV, Geo. Washington	6-8/235	Sr.
F	ROLAN ROBERTS, Virginia Tech	6-6/242	Soph.
G	GARY LUMPKIN, Xavier	6-2/200	Sr.
G	BEVON ROBIN, Fordham	6-2/185	Soph.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

JAMES POSEY, F, Xavier



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

MARK KARCHER, F, Temple

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Coby Turner, Dayton.

Best rebounder: K'Zell Wesson, La Salle.

Best playmaker: Pepe Sanchez, Temple.

Best defender: Lenny Brown, Xavier.

Best leaper: James Posey, Xavier.

Most versatile: Donnie Carr, La Salle.

Most flamboyant: Donnie Carr, La Salle.

Best NBA prospect: Lari Ketner, Massachusetts.

EAST DIVISION

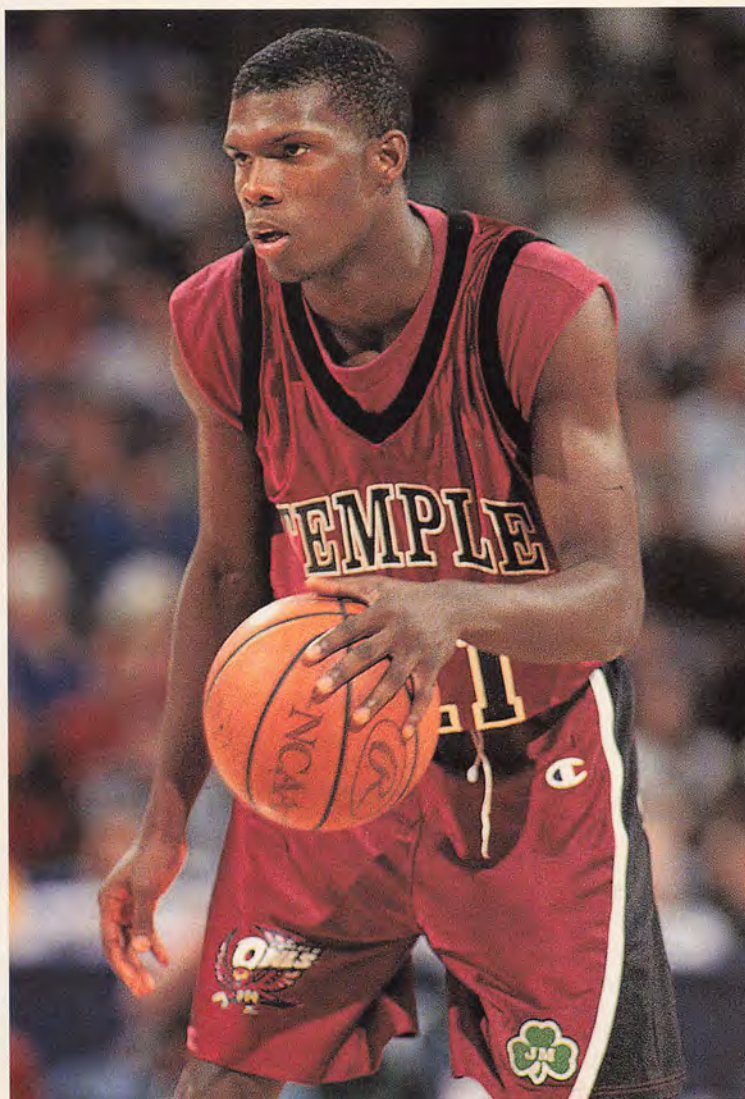
1. TEMPLE

Frontcourt: The Owls had problems here last season, thanks to Marc Jackson's early departure for the pro ranks (in Turkey), but things look great this year, thanks to a pair of arrivals. Sophomore Mark Karcher, a partial qualifier who had to sit out last season, is the wing scorer Temple has needed the past few years. He has great range and the strength to get his share inside. A former McDonald's All-American, Karcher has the potential to put up big numbers. He certainly is an upgrade from Julian Dunkley, who transferred after last season. Freshman Kevin Lyde is a classic, back-to-the-basket pivotman who will take the center position away from true power forward Lamont Barnes. Lyde is 6-10, 240 and doesn't have any delusions of becoming a guard. He wants to play down low, and John Chaney is thrilled about that. As of late August, there still was some concern about his academics, though. Barnes is a star-in-waiting who will shine now that he can play forward. He made first-team all-league last year playing out of position. He is effective to 15 feet on his jumper, and should be much better now that he can play facing the basket. Junior Keaton Sanders is a fine role player who can defend all three frontcourt spots. Hulking (6-10, 290) freshman Ronald Rollerson may redshirt, although he showed more talent during the summer than many believed he had.

Backcourt: If this isn't the best group in the league, it's certainly the deepest. And we're not too sure it isn't the finest. If junior point Pepe Sanchez concentrates more on passing and directing traffic than looking for his shot (he is a 34.2 percent career shooter), Chaney will be thrilled. Not that Sanchez isn't already a fine distributor and flashy passer. But Chaney is a former point guard, and he demands excellence of those running the show. During the summer, Sanchez was a member of the Argentine team that competed in the Goodwill Games in New York. Senior Rasheed Brokenborough spent the summer looking for his shot, which vacationed in an undisclosed location last season. Still, Brokenborough, a lefty, is a fine defender and charismatic player. But if he isn't more accurate this year, he'll find himself on the bench, thanks to the expected impact of Karcher and the promise of Lynn Greer and Quincy Wadley. Each impressed last year and earned considerable playing time. Greer is a fearless shooter (47.2 percent from 3-point range, which was 14th in the nation), and Wadley has the strength to play and defend the two or three spots.

Keys to success: Karcher and Lyde must contribute right away and make Temple a more versatile team at both ends of the court. Karcher brings much needed offensive pop for the myriad halfcourt sets Temple must negotiate each game, and Lyde's size and strength make him a perfect anchor for Chaney's vaunted zone and a perfect middle man for the Owls' offense, which needs strength in the pivot.

Outlook: Chaney will never say it, but this may be his deepest and most talented team. The old curmudgeon would counter that it hasn't won a game; still, the potential is there for another A-10 East title and a long NCAA tourney run. But the Owls must get better outside shooting from Brokenborough and immediate contributions from Karcher and Lyde if they want to shine on the national level. Expect that to happen. A big year awaits.



If Brokenborough doesn't shoot better than he did last season, he could find himself on the bench. Still, he is a good defender and charismatic player.

Owls Data

Coach: John Chaney (356-149, 16 years; 581-208 overall, 26 years; 16-14 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 21-9. Atlantic 10 East: 13-3/1st. Lost to West Virginia in NCAA West first round.

Starters lost (2): Julian Dunkley, F (4.5 ppg, 15.7 mpg; transfer); Lynard Stewart, F (6.9 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 52.0 FG%, 1.2 spg, 28.5 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Laws, G; Malik Moore, G (left school); Damien Reid, F; Michael Tabb, F (transfer).

Starters returning (3): Lamont Barnes, F, 6-10/Jr. (13.8 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 57.9 FG%, 1.3 spg, 2.5 bpg, 33.6 mpg); Rasheed Brokenborough, G, 6-4/Sr. (11.8 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 1.6 spg, 31.9 mpg); Juan "Pepe" Sanchez, G, 6-4/Jr. (9.6 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 74.3 FT%, 4.9 apg, 3.4 spg, 31.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Lynn Greer, G, 6-2/Soph. (7.9 ppg, 80.6 FT%, 47.2 3-pt%, 17.4 mpg); Keaton Sanders, F, 6-6/Jr. (50.0 FG%, 12.3 mpg); Quincy Wadley, G, 6-4/Jr. (8.0 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 81.0 FT%, 1.5 spg, 25.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Mark Karcher, F, 6-5/Soph. (Prop 48); Kevin Lyde, C, 6-10/Fr.; Ronald Rollerson, C, 6-10/Fr.; Alex Wesby, F, 6-6/Fr.

Last league title: 1998 (Atlantic 10 East).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1989.

Site: Philadelphia. **Home court:** The Forum at The Apollo of Temple (10,206).

2. RHODE ISLAND

Frontcourt: Stop the presses! It looks as if Lamar Odom's long, strange trip finally has ended with academic eligibility at URI. The multitasking 6-10 sophomore, who has the skills to play any one of four positions on the floor—and there are some who say he can handle point guard, too—will be expected to step in and star right away, no matter how cautious coach Jim Harrick wants to sound. The Rams need Odom to be big-time right away. He'll have some help up front, as forwards Luther Clay and Antonio Reynolds-Dean return. When they rebounded and scored last year, the Rams were tough to beat. Both are capable of averaging nine or 10 boards a game, and each is a low double-figure scorer with limited range. That's OK, because the Rams have plenty of guys who will fire it up from long distance. Freshman Tavorris Bell is a slasher who loves the open court and has loads of talent, and may just surprise a few folks who are concentrating too heavily on Odom. JC newcomer Leon Brisport should help out on the backboards. Senior David Arigbabu is another wide body who doesn't mind banging, and St. John's transfer Ed Brown checks in at about 325 pounds.

Backcourt: This area has Harrick worried, since the departures of NBA second-round draft picks Cuttino Mobley and Tyson Wheeler leave only senior combo guard Preston Murphy and a cast of newcomers. Mobley and Wheeler made big plays over and over again during the past few years, and Rhode Island will miss them. Murphy, an average distributor with good range, is an adequate starting point, but he struggled as a backup lead man last year and must continue to develop if the Rams are to have big success. The keys are freshmen Zach Marbury and Tip Vinson, who come to Kingston with great pedigrees but must shine if the Rams are to challenge for the East title. Vinson is a point with something of a scorer's mentality, while Marbury, whose more celebrated brother Stephon plays with the NBA Timberwolves, is a fine penetrator and scorer (24.7 ppg last year) with plenty of ability. Those guys are good players, but Mobley and Wheeler made great plays. Transfer David Smith also may contribute on the wing.

Key to success: The newcomers, particularly the guards, must prove they can play together. Harrick says he came in to Kingston cold last year and that the temperature hasn't been turned up too much, since so many new faces dot the roster this year. It doesn't hurt that Odom was considered the nation's top prep recruit two seasons ago, and Bell, Marbury and Vinson bring sturdy credentials to town this year.

Outlook: The Rams came within 30 seconds of the Final Four last year, but a repeat is highly unlikely. The backcourt situation is unsettled, and that means Odom and the big guys could go hungry. There is a lot of talent on the roster, and if Harrick can nurture it this season and convince it to stick around for 1999-2000, the Rams could be dangerous. But in a league with as much returning veteran aptitude as the A-10, a young squad could be in for trouble. Then again, with so much talent and a guy who can put together a system that allows it to flow freely, there could be nights when Rhode Island looks like a hardwood thresher. If it all comes together by March, nobody will want to play this team.

Rams Data

Coach: Jim Harrick (25-9, 1 year; 383-169 overall, 18 years; 17-12 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title with UCLA in '95).

1997-98 record: 25-9. Atlantic 10 East: 12-4/T2nd. Lost to Stanford in NCAA Midwest final.

Starters lost (3): Joshua King, F (8.7 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 45.3 FG%, 76.5 FT%, 40.7 3-pt%, 24.8 mpg); Cuttino Mobley, G (17.2 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 48.0 FG%, 85.6 FT%, 41.6 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 33.3 mpg); Tyson Wheeler, G (14.9 ppg, 36.3 3-pt%, 6.0 apg, 1.3 spg, 34.0 mpg). **Others lost:** John Bennett, F.

Starters returning (2): Luther Clay, C, 6-9/Jr. (9.8 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 49.2 FG%, 28.1 mpg); Antonio Reynolds-Dean, F, 6-7/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 1.1 spg, 2.5 bpg, 30.6 mpg).

Other returnees: David Arigbabu, F, 6-8/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 49.5 FG%, 72.4 FT%, 16.2 mpg); Tory Jefferson, F, 6-6/Soph.; Preston Murphy, G, 6-1/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 35.1 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 25.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Tavorris Bell, F, 6-6/Fr.; Leon Brisport, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Ed Brown, C, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/St. John's); Zach Marbury, G, 6-3/Fr.; Lamar Odom, F, 6-10/Soph. (transfer/UNLV); David Smith, G, 6-4/Soph. (transfer/William Jewell); Tip Vinson, G, 6-4/Fr.

Last league title: 1981 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Kingston, R.I. **Home courts:** Keaney Gym (3,385); Providence Civic Center (12,641).



Reynolds-Dean, part of a good front line, is capable of averaging nine or 10 rebounds and posting a double-figure scoring average.

ED NESSEN/TSN

3. MASSACHUSETTS

Frontcourt: There isn't a rougher, tougher crew in the A-10 than the Minutemen, who have the potential to pound opponents with four guys who weigh more than 240. Even the smaller guys, like defensive specialist Mike Babul, are mean. It starts with center Lari Ketner, who again will face double and triple teams; he needs to be more disciplined in his shot selection and elect to dominate at the other end, too. Ajmal Basit had some big games last year and should be more consistent either as Ketner's replacement or in tandem with him. JC transfer Anthony Oates (270 pounds) and Kitwana Rhymer (240), a partial qualifier last year, should provide plenty of competition down low. Babul, one of the A-10's finest defenders, is back at small forward, with feisty Chris Kirkland backing him up. Winston Smith and Ronell Blizzard, guys who missed most of last season with injuries, could help with their outside shooting skills.

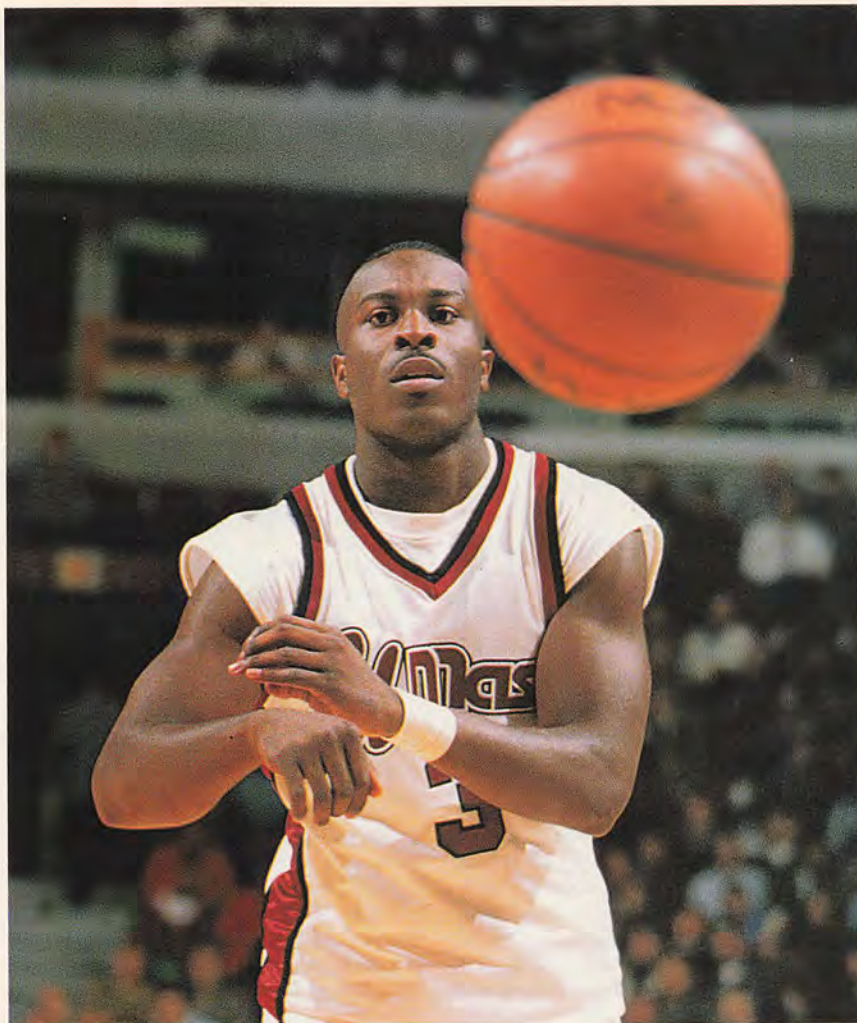
Backcourt: By the end of last season, opposing defenses were playing so far off the Minutemen guards that they were tripping over one another in the lane. Although the trio of Charlton Clarke, Monty Mack and Jonathan DePina played better than many thought, UMass needs more consistent outside help from those players. Maybe Clarke can pretend each shot he takes is a game-winner, as he excelled in those situations last season. He also was a steady lead guard. Mack showed signs of being a great scorer, although his patience could improve when rivals throw junk defenses at him. DePina has all the skills of a classic penetrator, but he, too, must improve his shot. If sophomore Rafael Cruz learns how to protect the ball even a little, he could be a potent scorer off the bench.

Keys to success: The Minutemen must prove they can score more effectively from the perimeter, or teams will spend the entire season playing sumo-ball with the big fellows inside. That means Mack must choose his spots more judiciously. Clarke needs to exhibit more consistency. Cruz has to realize that basketball is more than just scoring and Smith and Blizzard have to stay healthy enough to contribute some long-range work from the bench.

Outlook: The Minutemen surprised some by making it to the NCAA tourney last season, especially when one considers their shaky start. But UMass plays a more manageable non-conference schedule than it has in recent years, and coach Bruiser Flint has plenty of depth and options. He can go big, quick, defensive or offensive—depending on the situation. Ketner is a star who must serve as the team's anchor, and Clarke and Mack could be a great guard tandem in a league with plenty of superb backcourt duos. An NCAA tourney berth seemingly is assured, but it's time for UMass to move beyond the first round.

Minutemen Data

Coach: Bruiser Flint (40-25, 2 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).



Clarke, a steady lead guard who has shown signs of being a great scorer, and his backcourt teammates shot poorly last season, as foes repeatedly backed off the Minutemen guards.

1997-98 record: 21-11. Atlantic 10 East: 12-4/T2nd. Lost to Saint Louis in NCAA South first round.

Starters lost (1): Tyrone Weeks, F (10.1 ppg, 8.8 rpg, 49.0 FG%, 78.8 FT%, 1.3 spg, 1.1 bpg, 28.9 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Mike Babul, F, 6-6/Jr. (4.1 ppg, 23.9 mpg); Charlton Clarke, G, 6-3/Sr. (12.6 ppg, 3.8 apg, 1.3 spg, 35.4 mpg); Lari Ketner, C, 6-10/Sr. (15.2 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 52.3 FG%, 2.1 bpg, 30.3 mpg); Monty Mack, G, 6-3/Jr. (13.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 78.8 FT%, 35.8 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.3 spg, 35.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Ajmal Basit, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 19.4 mpg); Rafael Cruz, G, 6-2/Soph.; Jonathan DePina, G, 5-9/Soph. (17.6 mpg); Chris Kirkland, F, 6-6/Jr. (13.5 mpg); Winston Smith, F, 6-5/Soph. (RS/knee).

Top newcomers: Ronell Blizzard, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS); Anthony Oates, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Kitwana Rhymer, F, 6-10/Soph. (Prop 48).

Last league title: 1996.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1991.

Site: Amherst, Mass. **Home court:** Mullins Center (9,493).

4. ST. BONAVENTURE

Frontcourt: There was little question that Caswell Cyrus was one of the A-10's most improved players last year. Almost exclusively a shot blocker as a freshman, Cyrus developed into a solid offensive option and capable board man last season. Now, he's ready to

become a full-fledged pivot at both ends. Terrence Durham returns at the power spot but needs to be more productive on offense; he is a strong rebounder. Coach Jim Baron is happy with the offseason progress made by sophomore Peter Van Paassen, who is up to 250 pounds and spent some time with the Dutch national team during the summer. Freshman Elton Ruddock also will see some time, but he needs space to grow.

Backcourt: In keeping with Baron's taste for point guards who can score, Tim Winn will create for himself and others this year. That said, Baron would like Winn to make better decisions and think a little more like a point, something that should come with age. Winn's running mate could be David Capers or perhaps Isaac King, but look out for freshman wing Vidal Massiah, who brings excellent skills to Olean and should see plenty of playing time right away. Expect freshman Ernest Bremer, a combo player who can score, to figure in the picture as well.

Key to success: One (or more) of the wing men must develop into a steady scorer to complement Winn, or else he will face constant double teams.



Wilkins, one of the Hawks' few veterans, showed signs of being a big scorer last year.

Outlook: It's time to recognize the great job Baron has done at St. Bonaventure. Let's face it: Olean and its brutal winters aren't the best recruiting tools for a coach. But Baron made it to the NIT last year and should strike postseason gold again. In Winn and Cyrus, he has a strong outside-inside axis. And there is talent surrounding them. St. Bonaventure will be deeper and more athletic than in previous years. Don't be surprised if this club wins 20 games and flirts with an NCAA berth. The Bonnies are on the rise.

Bonnies Data

Coach: Jim Baron (79-94, 6 years; 153-165 overall, 11 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-15. Atlantic 10 East: 6-10/4th. Lost to Vanderbilt in NIT first round.

Starters lost (2): Rashaan Palmer, F (17.5 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 47.3 FG%, 1.0 spg, 33.3 mpg); James Singleton, G (8.5 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 74.4 FT%, 1.9 spg, 32.5 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Lumsdon, C; Jamie Moses, G; Etienne Norris, G.

Starters returning (3): Caswell Cyrus, C, 6-9/Jr. (10.3 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 3.1 bpg, 31.8 mpg); Terrence Durham, F, 6-7/Sr. (6.6 rpg, 1.4 spg, 25.8 mpg); Tim Winn, G, 5-10/Jr. (12.2 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 4.1 apg, 2.7 spg, 34.0 mpg).

Other returnees: David Capers, G, 6-3/Jr. (5.8 ppg, 78.1 FT%, 37.7 3-pt%, 16.2 mpg); James Hayden, G, 6-3/Jr.; Isaac King, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (5.6 ppg, 14.1 mpg); Peter Van Paassen, F/C, 6-10/Soph. (4.9 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 48.4 FG%, 19.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Ernest "J.R." Bremer, G, 6-1/Fr.; Robert Cheeks, G/F, 6-6/Fr.; Vidal Massiah, G/F, 6-6/Fr.; Elton Ruddock, F, 6-8/Fr.

Last league title: 1983 (tie, A-10 West).

Last time made NCAA field: 1978.

Site: Olean, N.Y. **Home court:** Reilly Center (6,000).

5. ST. JOSEPH'S

Frontcourt: It's time for forward Robert Haskins to step up and lead this team. Blessed

with considerable talent, he must score consistently, grab the big rebounds and take over when things get tight. He has the talent to do it. He likely will be paired with two newcomers, freshman center Damian Reid, and Pittsburgh transfer Andre Howard. Reid has strong inside-outside skills and the potential to become an excellent defender, and Howard made strides during his year off toward becoming a player capable of facing the basket. Depth comes from talented sophomore Frank Wilkins, who showed signs of big scoring ability last year, and raw 7-1 freshman Alexandre Sazanov.

Backcourt: Hawks fans moaned last year when Arthur Davis was unable to handle the academic requirements, but at least Rashid Bey still was around at the point. Now that the marvelous Bey is gone, the Hawks have to start over and likely will do it with two first-year players. There is no doubt freshman Larry Jennings has lots of talent, but he is raw and will have stretches in which he struggles. Naim Crenshaw, a partial qualifier who sat out last year, is a pure scorer, something the Hawks desperately need, although the season off probably left some rust. Tim Brown is a lithe backup point with serious limitations, and Erick Woods has the potential to be a solid bench scorer, provided his shot comes around.

Key to success: Coach Phil Martelli must take a lineup with four new faces, including a brand new backcourt, and get it to play with St. Joseph's customary fire and competitiveness. He relishes the chance to be the one providing the leadership this year, rather than looking toward his upperclassmen.

Outlook: After a magical 1996-97 season that produced an A-10 title and a Sweet 16 run, last year's 11-win campaign was a huge downer for Hawks fans, whose normally huge expectations ballooned. The bar will be set lower this year, with an eye on a bright future. Haskins has the potential to be a star, and Jennings has everything a successful point guard needs—except experience. Reid eventually will become an interior force in the A-10, and Crenshaw has fine scoring skills. But it will take time.

Hawks Data

Coach: Phil Martelli (56-37, 3 years; 2-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 11-17. Atlantic 10 East: 3-13/5th.

Starters lost (3): Rashid Bey, G (16.9 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 75.2 FT%, 35.3 3-pt%, 4.8 apg, 1.8 spg, 36.4 mpg); Harold Rasul, C (10.3 ppg, 8.8 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 1.0 spg, 34.9 mpg); Duval Simmonds, F (11.3 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 73.3 FT%, 1.1 bpg, 33.4 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (2): Robert Haskins, F, 6-8/Sr. (11.5 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 39.2 3-pt%, 32.5 mpg); Frank Wilkins, F, 6-9/Soph. (7.9 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 21.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Tim Brown, G, 6-3/Jr. (4.3 ppg, 19.8 mpg); John Gallagher, G, 6-0/Jr.; Chy Chy Ikenokwalu, F, 6-7/Soph.; Lionel Ngounou, F, 6-8/Soph.; Erick Woods, G, 6-5/Soph.

Top newcomers: Naim Crenshaw, G, 6-5/Soph. (Prop 48); Andre Howard, F, 6-6/Jr. (transfer/Pittsburgh); Larry Jennings, G, 6-1/Fr.; Damian Reid, C, 6-9/Fr.; Alexandre Sazanov, C, 7-1/Fr.

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Philadelphia. **Home court:** Alumni Memorial Fieldhouse (2,200).

6. FORDHAM

Frontcourt: The backcourt is A-10 caliber, but the front line is better suited for America East. Forward Maurice Curtis lost his battle with the NCAA for another year, so coach Nick Macarchuk must hope Argentine sophomore Alejandro Olivares shakes off last year's acclimation pains and produces in the middle. Meanwhile, three freshmen forwards—versatile Teremun Johnson, strong Steve Canal and athletic Duke McKamey—will get shots at plenty of playing time.

Backcourt: Macarchuk is not exaggerating when he says the Rams finally have an Atlantic 10 backcourt. Bevon Robin, last season's league Rookie of the Year, led the conference in scoring (18.3 ppg) and was among the leaders in seven of the 12 individual statistical categories. His running mate, Jason Harris, had a good debut as well, but now it's time for him to start acting like a two-guard. Imagine, a player today who needs to be told that it's OK to shoot. Nobody has to tell Ray Carroll, who missed last year because of personal problems, to shoot; he just needs to make more. If his erratic shot is cleared up, he could be a valuable weapon. Scott Harmatuk is another wing man who needs a shooting upgrade. Billy Lovett, who redshirted last year, is a steady backup point guard.

Key to success: Olivares and the frontcourt newcomers must produce immediately, or Fordham will get hammered on the interior.

Outlook: The growing process continues, slowly, in the Bronx. Macarchuk thinks he has put two solid recruiting classes together. Now he needs just one more and some time for the talent to germinate and, *voila*, fourth place in the East could be his. For now, expect another season at the bottom, with three or four conference victories. Remember, Rams fans, patience is a virtue.

Rams Data

Coach: Nick Macarchuk (149-177, 11 years; 298-305 overall, 21 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 6-21. Atlantic 10 East: 2-14/6th.

Starters lost (1): Maurice Curtis, F (16.3 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 51.9 FG%, 74.8 FT%, 33.4 mpg).

Others lost: Chris DiMascio, G (13.5 mpg); Connie Mack, C (46.6 FG%, 14.3 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Scott Harmatuk, G, 6-4/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 85.2 FT%, 26.3 mpg); Jason Harris, G, 5-10/Soph. (6.0 ppg, 73.7 FT%, 27.6 mpg); John Pugh, C, 6-10/Jr. (3.0 rpg, 15.6 mpg); Bevon Robin, G, 6-2/Soph. (18.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 81.2 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 3.8 apg, 1.7 spg, 36.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Ray Carroll, G, 6-4/Jr. (RS); Greg Griffin, F, 6-5/Sr. (4.6 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 1.2 spg, 19.9 mpg); Billy Lovett, G, 6-0/Sr. (RS/academics); Alejandro Olivares, F, 6-9/Soph. (15.8 mpg); Alexander Ziskunov, F, 6-10/Jr. (11.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Steve Canal, F, 6-9/Fr.; Teremun Johnson, F, 6-5/Fr.; Duke McKamey, F, 6-9/Fr.

Last league title: 1994 (tie, Patriot).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Bronx, N.Y. **Home court:** Rose Hill Gym (3,470).

WEST DIVISION

1. XAVIER

Frontcourt: The pro scouts love James Posey, and you should, too. Coach Skip Prosser says the senior is so good, he's going to force the coach to start him. That's bad news for A-10 opponents, who had enough trouble with Posey as the world's best sixth man. Effective from about 17 feet and in, Posey is strong around the basket and a great board man; he's especially good on the offensive boards. But he may miss Torraye Braggs and T.J. Johnson, who performed with great effectiveness, if not overwhelming distinction. Now, it's up to JC imports Desmond Walker, a great athlete, and Obi Harris, a big guy who runs well, and rough-and-tumble freshman Kevin Frey to handle the rough stuff inside. Walker and Harris have the size and strength to do it, and Prosser is high on Frey. It wouldn't hurt if 6-10 sophomore Reggie Butler stepped up, either.

Backcourt: What might have been a superb area will now merely be great. When 6-5 senior wing Darnell Williams tore his ACL in a summer league game, the Musketeers lost a leader, a front-line scorer and a perfect component for their up-tempo game. Williams emerged as a full-fledged star last year and looked ready to make some national noise. He worked well off the dribble, shot it from distance and didn't mind shouldering the burden in pressure situations. Of course, seniors Lenny Brown and Gary Lumpkin aren't stiff. Each is a three-year starter with ballhandling, defensive and scoring skills. Each needs to improve his shooting eye—particularly Lumpkin. Both are fearless players who love to pressure full court and push the ball. It's almost as if they were built for Prosser's style. Add in freshman Lloyd Price, who runs, jumps, slashes and scores with flair and effectiveness, and the XU perimeter is in great shape. Granted, Price isn't a proven upperclassman like Williams, but he has lots of talent. Price—considered by many as the best XU recruit ever—is a long, lean greyhound with great open-court skills. His only question is the long jumper: Prosser also would like to see some production from sophomore point Maurice McAfee and redshirt freshman Alvin Brown so that the future isn't bleak at guard.

Key to success: The frontcourt newcomers must take some of the pressure off Posey, who runs the risk of attracting more attention than a feminist at a Promise Keepers rally.

Outlook: The Musketeers have serious top-10 aspirations and plenty of talent to realize them. But there is no guarantee. Price must be as good as advertised and show some restraint in the up-tempo Xavier system. There's no doubt Brown and Lumpkin will deliver, just as they have the past three years. But they need to shoot better from 3-point range, since Williams won't be around to help out. And Prosser must hope his three frontcourt newcomers can come through when things get tough. That's not always going to happen, particularly with JC imports. Prosser is bound to begin the season as one of the nation's hottest coaches. Whether he finishes it at the same temperature will depend on how well he can mix the old and the new.

Musketeers Data

Coach: Skip Prosser (81-34, 4 years; 98-47 overall, 5 years; 1-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 22-8. Atlantic 10 West: 11-5/T1st. Lost to Washington in NCAA East first round.

Starters lost (2): Torraye Braggs, C (13.0 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 54.1 FG%, 73.1 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 29.7 mpg); T.J. Johnson, F (5.5 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 70.0 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 23.3 mpg).

Others lost: Pat Kelsey, G; Terrance Payne, F; Nate Turner, F (transfer/Belmont, Tenn.).

Starters returning (3): Lenny Brown, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.7 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 74.3 FT%, 36.6 3-pt%, 3.5 apg, 2.7 spg, 31.9 mpg); Gary Lumpkin, G, 6-2/Sr. (12.3 ppg, 78.3 FT%, 4.5 apg, 1.4 spg, 33.7 mpg); Darnell Williams, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (17.3 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 55.9 FG%, 70.9 FT%, 44.8 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 32.9 mpg).

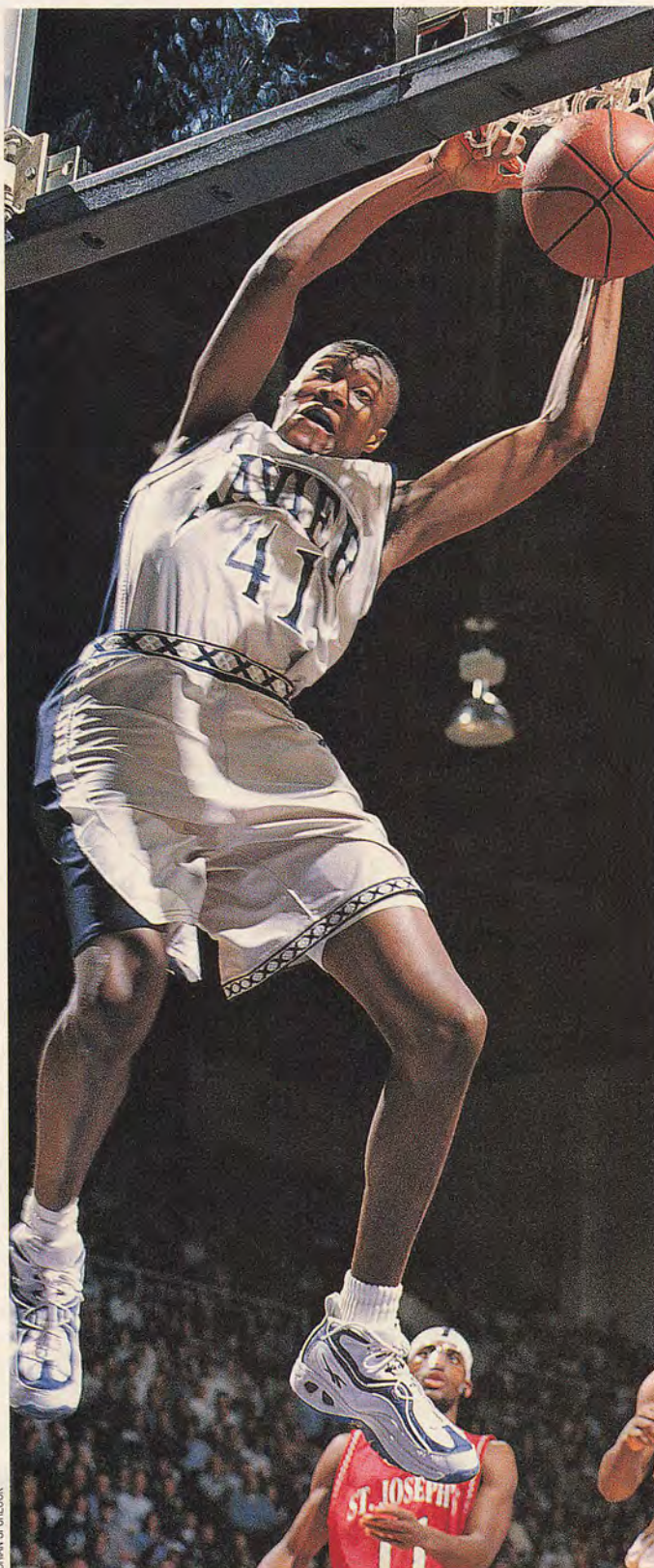
Other returnees: Reggie Butler, C, 6-10/Soph.; Maurice McAfee, G, 6-0/Soph. (8.9 mpg); James Posey, F, 6-8/Sr. (15.3 ppg, 8.4 rpg, 55.6 FG%, 82.4 FT%, 2.1 spg, 28.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Alvin Brown, G, 6-3/Fr. (RS); Kevin Frey, F, 6-7/Fr.; Obi Harris, F/C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Lloyd Price, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Desmond Walker, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1998 (tie, A-10 West).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Cincinnati. **Home court:** Cincinnati Gardens (10,100).



After previously bringing his high-flying act off the bench, Posey will start. Frontcourt newcomers must develop to keep defenders from doubling Posey.

2. GEORGE WASHINGTON

Frontcourt: It's a flat-out joke that Yegor Mescheriakov was only a third-team All-Atlantic 10 performer last season. There isn't much he can't do. This year, we'll see the whole package. But whether he has much help up front is another story. New GW coach Tom Penders likes something about all of his frontcourt players, but none is a complete player. Antxon Iturbe is a great enforcer and interior scorer, and Seco Camara has the potential to be a good shooter. Pat Ngongba runs the floor well and could blossom into a scorer, as could junior Francisco de Miranda. Freshman center Albert Roma is quite athletic for a 7-footer, and freshman Jason Smith is a good shot blocker. Put it all together, and you *might* have a productive frontcourt.

Backcourt: No one would fault Shawnta Rogers if the senior spent the entire summer with a smile on his face. Penders' arrival means the Colonials will run, shoot, press and have a lot more fun than they did under former coach Mike Jarvis. That's a perfect scenario for Rogers, who fills the scorebook like few other points in the country and may be, inch-for-inch, the best rebounder in the nation. Backcourt mate Mike King, a sophomore who exploded during his one term of action last year, should be happy with the coaching change as well. He gets to the basket with authority and finishes once there. Penders is convinced King can become a good long-range shooter. Freshman Dorien Brown is a good outside bomber, and point man Roey Eyal, who saw limited action last year, should get more of a chance this year, as his skills are better suited for Penders' system.

Key to success: GW must find a consistent interior presence to replace graduated pivot Alexander Koul. Sure, Koul might have regressed from his sophomore campaign, but the guy was 7-1, 295, and that type of size can't easily be found.

Outlook: Rogers, Mescheriakov and King form a great nucleus, but the rest of the roster poses some questions. Can Iturbe and Ngongba rebound every night? Does de Miranda blossom into a force? Will Roma and Smith contribute early? And what about the backcourt depth? Penders believes his aggressive system can cover up a lot of faults, and he may be right. At least he has a good starting point.

Colonials Data

Coach: Tom Penders (First year; 478-319 overall, 27 years; 12-9 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 24-9, Atlantic 10 West: 11-5/T1st. Lost to Oklahoma State in NCAA South first round.
Starters lost (1): Alexander Koul, C (12.0 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 56.7 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 26.1 mpg).
Others lost: J.J. Brade, G (4.0 ppg, 14.4 mpg); Darin Green, F; Rasheed Hazzard, G; Andrei Krivonos, G (78.7 FT%, 14.9 mpg).
Starters returning (4): Antxon Iturbe, F, 6-8/Soph. (6.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 64.6 FG%, 23.5 mpg); Mike King, G, 6-5/Soph. (13.2 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 48.0 FG%, 1.3 spg, 26.5 mpg); Yegor Mescheriakov, F, 6-8/Sr. (12.7 ppg, 4.8 rpg,

75.2 FT%, 35.8 3-pt%, 28.1 mpg); Shawnta Rogers, G, 5-4/Sr. (14.7 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 77.4 FT%, 37.7 3-pt%, 4.8 apg, 2.4 spg, 34.1 mpg).
Other returnees: Seco Camara, F, 6-5/Sr. (4.0 ppg, 11.4 mpg); Francisco de Miranda, F, 6-9/Jr. (5.1 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 55.5 FG%, 12.4 mpg); Roey Eyal, G, 6-2/Soph.; Pat Ngongba, F, 6-8/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 18.3 mpg).
Top newcomers: Dorien Brown, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Albert Roma, C, 7-0/Fr.; Jason Smith, F, 6-8/Fr.; Andry Sola, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1998 (tie, A-10 West).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Washington, D.C. **Home court:** Charles E. Smith Center (5,000).

3. DAYTON

Frontcourt: Coach Oliver Purnell admits it probably will take a group effort to replace the production of departed forward Ryan Perryman, but at least he likes the group that will try. The pivot belongs to Mark Ashman, who needs to assert himself more or risk losing time to strongman Stephen Bami or active Michael Harmon. Expect a battle between steady Ted Fitz and athletic freshman Nate Green for Perryman's spot, although don't rule out a twin towers look with Ashman and Bami. Coby Turner is a steady scorer at small forward, and Yuanta Holland, a partial qualifier who sat out last year, has tremendous promise at both forward spots.

Backcourt: Purnell believes Edwin Young has just as much talent as the rest of the league's top point men. That's quite a statement, given the A-10's depth at that position, but Young did have a fine second half of the season and needs only to improve his shooting eye to excel. Tony Stanley had an impressive debut and showed himself to be a dangerous scorer from long range and close to the basket. Andy Metzler is a capable back-up point who can swing to the wing; a good thing, since the Flyers are high on speedy freshman point David Morris. Josh Postorino brings experience off the bench at the point.

Key to success: The Flyers must replace Perryman's production—particularly his rebounding—or risk getting pounded inside.

Outlook: Last year, a shaky RPI rating, thanks to a weak non-conference schedule, torpedoed the Flyers' NCAA hopes. That has been corrected by the additions of Cincinnati, Louisville and Marquette. Now, the Flyers have to deliver. This will be Purnell's deepest, most athletic team, and it should allow him to press and run more. Stanley has the potential to be a big-time scorer, while Turner, Holland and Green are fine frontcourt athletes. Young runs the team with aplomb, and Morris is a perfect fit for an up-tempo philosophy. If the big guys step up, the Flyers could challenge for the West crown.

Flyers Data

Coach: Oliver Purnell (57-59, 4 years; 157-135 overall, 10 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 21-12, Atlantic 10 West: 11-5/T1st. Lost to Penn State in R1 second round.
Starters lost (1): Ryan Perryman, F (15.2 ppg, 12.5 rpg, 55.8 FG%, 33.1 mpg).



Mescheriakov is a talented scorer. GW needs to find him some frontcourt help this season.

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (4): Mark Ashman, C, 6-9/Jr. (11.7 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 45.0 FG%, 28.1 mpg); Tony Stanley, G, 6-4/Soph. (13.1 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 85.1 FT%, 35.3 3-pt%, 27.6 mpg); Coby Turner, F, 6-7/Sr. (13.3 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 4.1 apg, 1.1 spg, 44.8 FG%, 79.8 FT%, 51.7 3-pt%, 32.2 mpg); Edwin Young, G, 6-2/Jr. (8.2 ppg, 80.2 FT%, 30.4 3-pt%, 29.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Stephen Bami, C, 6-9/Soph.; Cain Doliboa, F, 6-6/Soph.; Ted Fitz, F, 6-7/Jr.; Michael Harmon, C, 6-10/Soph.; Andy Metzler, G, 6-3/Jr.; Josh Postorino, G, 6-0/Sr.

Top newcomers: Nate Green, F, 6-6/Fr.; Yuanta Holland, F, 6-7/Soph. (Prop 48); David Morris, G, 5-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1998 (West).

Last NCAA appearance: 1990.
Site: Dayton, Ohio. **Home court:** University of Dayton Arena (13,455).

BRIAN SPURLOCK

4. VIRGINIA TECH

Frontcourt: By outdueling Wake Forest for the services of forward Dennis Mims, the Hokies have upgraded their front line considerably. In a perfect world, the active Mims will bring his quick feet and soft hands off the bench, behind Russ Wheeler, but nothing is perfect. One guy who doesn't have to worry about a reserve role is Rolan Roberts, who had a great freshman season and should become one of the league's top power players this year. Andre Ray may be only 6-4, but he is an excellent defender and strong slasher, and redshirt freshman Clinton McPherson and senior Alvaro Tor will give the Hokies depth and provide excellent practice competition for the regulars.

Backcourt: If Brendan Dunlop plays as he did during the second half of last season, the Hokies will be fine at the point. Dunlop made better decisions and committed fewer turnovers from January on, although he'll need to shoot more accurately than he did. VT has no set off-guard and should use a rotation of redshirt freshman Kenny Harrell, who missed last year with an Achilles' infection, JC transfer Jermaine Kimbrough, a defensive specialist capable of applying full-court pressure, and sniper Eddie Lucas, who also will see time at small forward. It's not a perfect situation, but it's all Tech has, since last year's starting off-guard, Jenis Grindstaff, transferred to Tennessee.

Key to success: Dunlop and his backcourt mates must be productive, or Virginia Tech will drown in the guard-heavy A-10.

Outlook: Coach Bobby Hussey figures he is one more strong recruiting class away from contention. That's not to say the Hokies won't be tough this year. Roberts is a big-time player, and Mims has all the tools to star down the road. VT has solid depth, but it needs to get some production from the perimeter positions, particularly from Lucas, who needs to settle down and let his great shooting stroke work for him. This team will make trouble for plenty of the A-10 big guns this year and could well ascend to the league's elite in 1999-2000.

Hokies Data

Coach: Bobby Hussey (10-17, 1 year; 297-255 overall, 19 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 10-17, Atlantic 10 West: 5-11/T4th.

Starters lost (1): Jenis Grindstaff, G (10.5 ppg, 76.4 FT%, 3.7 apg, 1.3 spg, 33.0 mpg; transfer/Tennessee).

Others lost: Shawn Browne, F (3.0 rpg, 13.0 mpg); Myron Guillory, G (6.0 ppg, 87.5 FT%, 42.0 3-pt%, 20.0 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Brendan Dunlop, G, 6-2/Jr. (7.3 ppg, 76.7 FT%, 1.5 spg, 27.0 mpg); Andre Ray, F, 6-4/Jr. (4.3 rpg, 18.0 mpg); Rolan Roberts, F, 6-6/Soph. (13.6 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 53.4 FG%, 2.2 bpg, 27.0 mpg); Russ Wheeler, C/F, 6-8/Jr. (9.6 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 47.5 FG%, 1.4 spg, 29.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Jermaine Kilgore, F, 6-6/Jr.; Eddie Lucas, F/G, 6-6/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 76.6 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 21.0 mpg); Alvaro Tor, C, 6-9/Sr. (51.3 FG%, 9.0 mpg); David Whaley, F, 6-7/Soph.

Top newcomers: Kenny Harrell, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS/Achilles); Jermaine Kimbrough, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Clinton McPherson, C, 6-9/Fr. (RS); Dennis Mims, F, 6-9/Fr.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Blacksburg, Va. **Home court:** Cassell Coliseum (10,052).

5. LA SALLE

Frontcourt: Coach Speedy Morris spent all last year trying to convince heralded recruit Rasual Butler to hit the books, but his advice went unheeded. Now, Butler must make the requisite SAT score by November, or he'll miss the season. Without the high-scoring wing, La Salle will need to rely on power man K'Zell Wesson, who needs to show a bigger interest in playing defense this year, and promising sophomore Victor Thomas. Thomas flashed a strong inside-outside game last year but must become more active on the glass. Center Garrett Bragg has potential, but must get himself in better condition. The same goes for Bobby Collins, or he'll be passed by freshman Jermaine Peebles, whom Morris believes could surprise some people.

Backcourt: Donnie Carr may take too many shots, but he's the only sure-fire weapon on the La Salle team, and keep in mind that he finished seventh in the A-10 in assists last year (4.4 apg). Now, it's time for him to make more than 35 percent of his field goal tries (30.9 percent last year) and become a complete scorer, not just a gunner. He'll team with Julian Blanks, a touted freshman point man, in what could become an exciting backcourt. Deon Jones will provide what depth his 5-8, 151-pound frame will allow, but it looks as if Carr is in for another season of playing 39 minutes a night.

Key to success: One of the freshman point guards must emerge as a floor leader capable of freeing Carr to concentrate on scoring more efficiently.

Outlook: Morris enters this season in the last year of a contract, and the pressure is on. La Salle has had five consecutive losing seasons, and the alumni are getting restless. If Butler qualifies, that will give the Explorers a big boost, but La Salle can't rely too heavily on that. For now, Carr needs to improve his shot selection, the frontcourt needs to get tougher, and one or both of the point guards must show the skills necessary to run a team. La Salle gets to play in an on-campus arena after years as a nomad, and that should help, but the players will ultimately determine Morris' fate.

Explorers Data

Coach: Speedy Morris (202-154, 12 years; 1-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 9-18, Atlantic 10 West: 5-11/T4th.

Starters lost (2): Mike Gizzi, F (15.9 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 75.4 FT%, 37.7 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 35.9 mpg); Shawn Smith, G (7.7 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 83.8 FT%, 37.3 3-pt%, 4.6 apg, 2.3 spg, 33.3 mpg).

Others lost: Brian Flickinger, F; Olaf Landgren, F (75.0 FT%, 9.4 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Garrett Bragg, C, 6-11/Soph. (5.0 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 16.5 mpg); Donnie Carr, G, 6-2/Jr. (17.9 ppg, 81.1 FT%, 4.4 apg, 1.0 spg, 38.6 mpg); K'Zell Wesson, F, 6-7/Sr. (13.1 ppg, 10.5 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 33.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Victor Thomas, F, 6-7/Soph. (11.2 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 39.8 3-pt%, 29.6 mpg); Bobby Collins, C, 6-10/Jr.; James Jordan, F, 6-8/Jr. (11.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Deon Jones, G, 5-8/Fr.; Julian Blanks, G, 6-2/Fr.; Rasual Butler, F, 6-7/Fr. (will miss at least the first semester because of academics); Jermaine Peebles, F, 6-8/Fr.; Anwar Wilson, F, 6-7/Fr. (RS).

Last league title: 1990 (MAAC South).

Last NCAA appearance: 1992.

Site: Philadelphia. **Home court:** Hayman Center (4,000).

6. DUQUESNE

Frontcourt: The outlook isn't great. Double-figure scorers Kevin Price and Nick Bosnic are gone, leaving the onus on Kevin Shand and Devone Stephenson. New coach Darelle Porter thinks each will produce, thanks to added opportunities, but the Dukes need more. Nyah Jones must get stronger and more consistent, and fellow junior John Davis needs to step up at power forward. Athletic freshman Wayne Smith should help, but this group lacks star power.

Backcourt: Courtney Wallace didn't start playing until the second semester of last year, but he didn't need much time to prove he can handle the point and distribute the ball. The big question is whether anybody on the Dukes will know what to do with his passes. Gone is high-scoring guard Mike James, and new coach Darelle Porter, at 28 the youngest boss in Division I, must hope Shawn Tann and Charles Stanfield or sharp-shooting freshman Austin Kegerreis can step in and score.

Key to success: Porter must find some perimeter players who can score.

Outlook: It's a good thing Porter, the interim coach, is young, because this season is going to age him. He jokes about being able to get out on the court and show the players a few things, but by season's end, the former Pittsburgh guard may be wishing he had some eligibility left. Wallace is a good place to start, and players such as Stanfield, Stephenson and Tann have potential, but none is proven. And the big guys who were soft last year may need personality transplants to become tough enough for the improved A-10 of '98-99.

Dukes Data

Coach: Darelle Porter (first year).

1997-98 record: 11-19, Atlantic 10 West: 5-11/T4th.

Starters lost (3): Nick Bosnic, F (13.5 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 40.1 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 29.2 mpg); Mike James, G (17.5 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 74.3 FT%, 3.5 apg, 2.2 spg, 34.3 mpg); Kevin Price, F (12.3 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 25.2 mpg).

Others lost: Vince Clarno, G.

Starters returning (2): Kevin Shand, C, 6-10/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 54.9 FG%, 1.1 bpg, 24.8 mpg); Courtney Wallace, G, 6-4/Soph. (6.7 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 75.6 FT%, 4.0 apg, 1.5 spg, 24.0 mpg).

Other returnees: John Davis, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (3.1 rpg, 15.4 mpg); Nyah Jones, F, 6-11/Jr. (2.3 rpg); Aaron Lovelace, G, 6-5/Soph. (16.7 mpg); Charles Stanfield, G, 6-4/Soph.; Devone Stephenson, F, 6-7/Jr. (4.7 ppg, 50.5 FG%, 14.8 mpg); Shawn Tann, G, 6-4/Soph. (13.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Austin Kegerreis, G, 6-3/Fr.; Wayne Smith, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1981 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1977.

Site: Pittsburgh. **Home court:** A.J. Palumbo Center (6,200).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: Minnesota. Weren't the Gophers on the rise no more than two years ago? Well, here they come again. Last year's NIT champs landed ballyhooed center Joel Przybilla, who should provide a dimension Minnesota lacked last season.

Descending: Michigan, like a cement shoe. OK, we all know about Louis Bullock and back-court mate Robbie Reid, but who are the rest of these guys? Who said the Wolverines weren't punished for breaking rules?

Biggest sneakers to fill: Michigan center Robert Traylor's. Ain't nobody remotely resembling the big fella on the Wolverines' roster. By the end of the season, he was the Big Ten's most dominant player. Josh Asselin and Peter Vignier are 6-11, but they'll need more than height to duplicate Traylor's thunder.

Most underrated player: Penn State forward Jarrett Stephens. Before he blew out his knee in the NIT semifinals, Stephens was the best player Penn State had. But nobody knew it. Pete Lisicky and Calvin Booth had the name recognition. Stephens, a 6-7, 250-pound senior, had the game.

Most overrated player: Iowa forward Sam Okey. OK, so Okey isn't rated highly enough anymore to be overrated. He once was, though. He once was the Big Ten freshman of the year, the first player in league history to lead his team in points, rebounds, assists and blocks. Now, after transferring from Wisconsin and pleading guilty to a drunk driving charge at Iowa, his future is uncertain.

Coach on the hot seat: Indiana's Bob Knight. They're approaching the saturation point in Bloomington. When the team is busy winning titles, the Knight-generated static is much easier on the ears. Trouble is, the Hoosiers haven't won a Big Ten title since 1993. Until they beat Oklahoma last March, they hadn't won an NCAA Tournament game in four years. And don't think the fans didn't notice.

Best bets: Whenever Northwestern loses a close game, bad jokes about point-shaving will start flying like Sean Wink 3-pointers. ... Tom Izzo buddy Fran Fraschilla will interview for the soon-to-be-vacant Iowa job, but he won't get it. ... Steve Fisher, who won a national title and finished second twice at Michigan, turned in one of the greatest coaching jobs ever in 1992 when he led five freshman starters to the national title game. Even so, his coaching acumen will be questioned when he goes for another job.

Odds and ends: Michigan State fans are looking ahead to the 1999-2000 season, when Duke transfer Mike Chappell will be eligible. Chappell, a 6-8 former all-state forward from Lathrup Village (Mich.) Southfield-Lathrup High, started 21 of Duke's first 22 games last year before losing his starting job. A versatile wing player who can guard just about anybody, Chappell averaged 7.1 points and 2.0 rebounds for the Blue Devils. ... A New Jersey insurance company is suing Jess Settles, alleging the former All-Big Ten forward from Iowa lied about the condition of his back on an application for \$1 million insurance policy.



Bullock is one of the few recognizable names on a Michigan team that is slumping.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. Illinois (G Cleotis Brown). The big prize, point guard Frankie Williams, Mr. Basketball in Illinois, is a partial qualifier, so at least he can practice with the team. Brown, a JC transfer, has a chance to step in and be the Illini's leading scorer. Fess Hawkins, a 6-9, 280-pound JC transfer, will provide needed bulk in the paint. Carvell Ammons, a 6-6 forward from Champaign, Ill., is eligible after transferring from Northwestern. The 6-10 Robert Archibald is an intriguing prospect. Lucas Johnson, a 6-7 forward, is the brother of former Illini scrapper Brian. Damir Krupalija, a 6-8 forward, could make an immediate impact.
2. Iowa (G/F Joey Range).
3. Indiana (G Dane Fife).
4. Minnesota (C Joel Przybilla).
5. Ohio State (G Slobodan Savovic).
6. Northwestern (G/F Steve Lepore).
7. Purdue (C John Allison).
8. Wisconsin (G Travon Davis).
9. Penn State (F Rob Walls).
10. Michigan (G/F Leon Jones).
11. Michigan State (F Adam Ballinger).

BY MARC HANSEN
Des Moines (Iowa) Register

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Michigan St. | 7. Wisconsin |
| 2. Purdue | 8. Ohio State |
| 3. Minnesota | 9. Illinois |
| 4. Penn State | 10. Northwestern |
| 5. Indiana | 11. Michigan |
| 6. Iowa | |

ALL-BIG TEN

FIRST TEAM

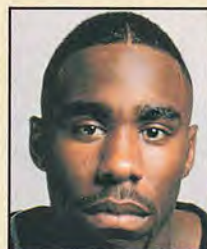
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	BRIAN CARDINAL, Purdue	6-8/235	Jr.
C	EVAN ESCHMEYER, Northwestern	6-11/244	Sr.
F	QUINCY LEWIS, Minnesota	6-7/215	Sr.
G	MATEEN CLEAVES, Michigan State	6-2/195	Jr.
G	MICHAEL REDD, Ohio State	6-5/193	Soph.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/G	LUKE RECKER, Indiana	6-6/190	Soph.
C	GUY RUCKER, Iowa	6-9/235	Jr.
F	ANTONIO SMITH, Michigan State	6-8/250	Sr.
G	LOUIS BULLOCK, Michigan	6-3/180	Sr.
G	A.J. GUYTON, Indiana	6-1/175	Jr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

MATEEN CLEAVES, G, Michigan State



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

SCOONIE PENN, G, Ohio State

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter:** Louis Bullock, Michigan.
- Best rebounder:** Evan Eschmeyer, Northwestern.
- Best playmaker:** Mateen Cleaves, Michigan State.
- Best defender:** Ty Calderwood, Wisconsin.
- Best leaper:** Morris Peterson, Michigan State.
- Most versatile:** Luke Recker, Indiana.
- Most flamboyant:** Mateen Cleaves, Michigan State.
- Best NBA prospect:** Mateen Cleaves, Michigan State.

BIG TEN

CONFERENCE

1. MICHIGAN STATE

Frontcourt: No super heroes here, just super depth. Last year, the Spartans started three forwards—rebounding virtuoso Antonio Smith, freshman surprise Andre Hutson and slick-shooting Jason Klein—and probably will again. Smith is a 250-pound warrior who ranked second in the Big Ten in rebounding last season with an 8.9 average, but he needs to become more of an offensive contributor. Hutson is a lithe athlete who is active around the basket. The coaches didn't think he'd be this good, but Hutson, who is effective with his left hand, plays with a poise and toughness that belies his youth. Klein, a senior who blossomed last year thanks to newfound confidence, led Michigan State with 69 3-pointers. With his athletic ability, streaky reserve Morris Peterson could start for a lot of teams. While battling the effects of a broken right wrist last year, Peterson developed a commitment to defense that had been lacking. A.J. Granger, an athletic and versatile junior, offers a soft shooting touch down low. Michigan State is looking for Granger to score more and improve significantly. When healthy, swingman David Thomas is a slasher, but he needs to work on his ballhandling and shooting. With no true center of any impact, the Spartans will miss shot blocker DuJuan Wiley more than folks think. The Spartans hope Ken Miller can pick up some of Wiley's load.

Backcourt: Mateen Cleaves is the reigning Big Ten player of the year and, until he hurt an ankle, the only college representative on the U.S. World Championship team during the summer. He needs to shoot better, be more consistent and improve his assist-turnover ratio (217-117). Spartans coaches want Cleaves—TSN's choice for preseason national player of the year—to make this his team after guiding Michigan State to its first Big Ten title since Steve Smith led the Spartans to the top in 1989-90. Charlie Bell was one of the league's top freshmen. Bell played with the savvy of a veteran. A consistent defensive presence who typically guards the opposition's top offensive threat, Bell also is a scoring and rebounding force from his off-guard slot. He could become a star with improved ballhandling and shooting. Can't do much better than those two at the guard slots, right? Sure can. Add Thomas Kelley, who averaged 8.1 points as a junior two years ago. Last season, when most of the pundits were picking the Spartans for eighth or ninth place, Kelley was the most experienced player on the roster and likely would have been one of the team's top scorers. November foot surgery knocked him into a redshirt year, but he should be ready to contribute again. Sophomores Doug Davis and Lorenzo Guess, a free safety on the football team, offer depth.

Key to success: The Spartans will surprise nobody this season, which means they can take nothing for granted. A lapse in the final home game against Purdue cost them the outright Big Ten title. A lapse in the first round of the Big Ten Tournament against Minnesota dropped them to a four seed in the NCAA tourney. This team must carry that same underdog strategy into the new season. When that first jump ball goes up, last year's accomplishments mean nothing.

Outlook: The deep and versatile Spartans, who are celebrating their 100th season of hoops, have an All-American point guard. They have two all-conference-caliber role players in Smith and Klein. They have a roster full of athletes. With good health and good luck, the Spartans could find themselves in the Final Four, but work needs to be done on perimeter shooting and improving the inside game offensively and defensively. This isn't a team that takes your breath away, but it's the same group that got halfway to the summit last season under coach Tom Izzo, who has Michigan State playing perhaps the toughest non-conference schedule in school history.



No one argues the fact Smith is a tenacious rebounder, but he needs to develop some offensive skills to give the Spartans additional inside scoring punch.

Spartans Data

Coach: Tom Izzo (55-36, 3 years; 2-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 22-8. Big Ten: 13-3/T1st. Lost to North Carolina in NCAA East semifinals.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: DuJuan Wiley, C (6.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 62.4 FG%, 72.3 FT%, 1.7 bpg, 16.2 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Charlie Bell, G, 6-3/Soph. (9.2 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 79.3 FT%, 24.2 mpg); Mateen Cleaves, G, 6-2/Jr. (16.1 ppg, 70.3 FT%, 7.2 apg, 2.4 spg, 33.5 mpg); Andre Hutson, F, 6-8/Soph. (7.5 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 61.3 FG%, 75.4 FT%, 21.0 mpg); Jason Klein, F, 6-7/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 72.7 FT%, 41.1 3-pt%, 27.1 mpg); Antonio Smith, F, 6-8/Sr. (7.9 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 29.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Doug Davis, G, 6-3/Soph.; A.J. Granger, F, 6-9/Jr. (12.0 mpg); Lorenzo Guess, G, 6-3/Soph.; Thomas Kelley, G, 6-2/Sr. (RS/foot); Ken Miller, C, 6-10/Soph.; Morris Peterson, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.0 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 18.6 mpg); David Thomas, F/G, 6-7/Jr. (3.8 rpg, 46.9 FG%, 14.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Adam Ballinger, F, 6-9/Fr.; Brandon Smith, G, 5-10/Soph. (transfer/Coastal Carolina).

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: East Lansing, Mich. **Home court:** Breslin Center (15,138).

2. PURDUE

Frontcourt: The high-scoring Boilermakers lost to Stanford in the NCAA Tournament largely because they lacked sufficient muscle to contend with the Cardinal's big bruisers. With 6-11 Brad Miller gone, the problem isn't about to go away. Coach Gene Keady, who stressed weight training in the offseason, hopes to get at least some relief from Cameron Stephens and Jamaal Davis. This is a lot to ask from two sophomores who played intramurals last season while trying to gain their eligibility. But Stephens, who disappointed coaches by not working out on campus over the summer, and Davis will provide strength and athleticism in the paint. Brian Cardinal, an all-conference selection who played in the Goodwill Games, is a scrapper nicknamed "Citizen Pain" for his floor-burn style, but he can't do all the dirty work. He is an underrated shooter who must fill a leadership void last season's seniors left empty. Mike Robinson is a talented wing player who made the Big Ten's first-team all-tournament squad. He is an active presence around the basket who must develop a consistent jumper to fulfill the big expectations he brought to campus. Gary McQuay has potential but is still trying to figure out what it takes to make an impact. He needs to understand and accept his role: to rebound, play defense and get putbacks; it's not to shoot jumpers. The sinewy leaper is an intriguing athlete, but he's maddeningly inconsistent. It's time to mature. Maybe the arrival from junior college of his older brother, Greg McQuay, will help Gary grow up and blossom. Coaches signed Greg McQuay, a good leaper and rebounder, because he's willing to do the dirty work eschewed by several other members of the touted junior class. Freshman John Allison has promising post skills and is a good shot blocker, but his 215-pound body isn't Big Ten-ready. But as the only true center on the roster, Allison may be forced into duty. Rodney Smith is an athletic freshman who could surprise as a rebounder, defender and hustler. During informal workouts over the summer, Smith's work ethic impressed many.

Backcourt: An interesting battle shapes up at the point. Carson Cunningham, a transfer from Oregon State, could bump the steadily improving Alan Eldridge from the starting lineup. In his only season at Oregon State, Cunningham paced the Beavers in scoring and assists while finishing second to Arizona's Mike Bibby in Pac-10 Freshman of the Year voting. The presence of Cunningham, a sharp shooter who plays with abandon, expedited overmatched Mosi Barnes' transfer to Eastern Michigan. Eldridge appears finally to be developing confidence in his skills. The lefthander isn't exceptionally quick, but he possesses a sweet shot, plays smart and knows his limitations. He also plays good defense. Jaraan Cornell, who paced the Big Ten and ranked sixth in the nation by hitting 50.4 percent of his 3-pointers, is a budding star who was hampered by an ankle injury late last season. In addition to being a dead-eye shooter, the hard-working lefthander is good off the dribble. Cornell must fill the scoring void created by Chad Austin's departure. Tony Mayfield benefitted from Cornell's ankle problem. One of just two seniors (Eldridge is the other), Mayfield works hard, is a tough defender and can hit open shots. Freshman Maynard Lewis, one of 11 Indiana natives on the roster, is a good shooter who will provide depth.

Keys to success: Stephens and Davis, who each ranked among the nation's top 100 recruits as high school seniors in 1996-97. Some Boilermakers fans believe the presence of the two non-qualifiers would have meant the difference last season between a Sweet 16 loss to Stanford and the school's first Final Four berth since 1980. By March, lack of interior depth was a major problem—even with Miller. The Boilermakers need an inside presence to buoy a deep, athletic backcourt.

Outlook: Bright, as usual under Keady, who became the school's career leader in victories last season and had the court at Mackey Arena named in his honor. With Cunningham pressing Eldridge at the point, with Cornell healthy again, with Cardinal wreaking his usual havoc and with Stephens and Davis eligible, the Boilermakers should make a run at the seventh Big Ten championship in the Keady era and claim a Sweet 16 berth for a second consecutive season. Regardless of the outcome of this campaign, the 1999-2000 season looks especially bright for Purdue.



The Boilermakers know they can count on Cardinal giving a great effort. It's time for his teammates to match his desire and intensity.

Boilermakers Data

Coach: Gene Keady (394-168, 18 years; 432-187 overall, 20 years; 13-15 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 28-8. Big Ten: 12-4/3rd. Lost to Stanford in NCAA Midwest semifinals.

Starters lost (2): Chad Austin, G (17 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 76.3 3-pt%, 3.7 apg, 1.3 spg, 2.37 bpg, 32.7 mpg); Brad Miller, C (17.2 ppg, 8.9 rpg, 63.2 FG%, 78.0 FT%, 1.2 spg, 1.6 bpg, 29.2 mpg).

Others lost: Mosi Barnes, G, 6-0/Jr. (6.0 mpg; transfer/Eastern Michigan); B.J. Carretta, G, 6-3/Soph. (left team).

Starters returning (3): Brian Cardinal, F, 6-8/Jr. (12.0 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 50.9 FG%, 78.7 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 25.7 mpg); Jaraan Cornell, G, 6-3/Jr. (12.8 ppg, 51.9 FG%, 81.3 FT%, 50.0 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 23.4 mpg); Alan Eldridge, G, 6-1/Sr. (7.2 ppg, 81.4 FT%, 37.9 3-pt%, 3.6 apg, 1.4 spg, 28.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Chad Kerkhof, G, 6-0/Jr.; Gary McQuay, F, 6-8/Jr. (6.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 19.3 mpg); Tony Mayfield, G, 6-1/Sr. (39.5 3-pt%, 16.6 mpg); Mike Robinson, F, 6-6/Jr. (11.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 51.1 FG%, 76.8 FT%, 24.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: John Allison, C, 6-10/Fr.; Carson Cunningham, G, 6-0/Soph. (transfer/Oregon State); Jamaal Davis, F, 6-7/Soph. (Prop 48); Maynard Lewis, G, 6-1/Fr.; Greg McQuay, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Rodney Smith, F, 6-6/Fr.; Cameron Stephens, F, 6-8/Soph. (Prop 48).

Last league title: 1996.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1992.

Site: West Lafayette, Ind. **Home court:** Mackey Arena (14,123).

3. MINNESOTA

Frontcourt: It was a spirited battle last season to see who had the worst inside game in the Big Ten—Ohio State or Minnesota. At least the Gophers blocked a bunch of shots. Other than that, this team lived or died on the perimeter. That changes only if athletic freshman Joel Przybilla, a McDonald's All-American, throws his 250 pounds around. Everyone believes he will—eventually. Przybilla, a good defender, is considered the best big man produced by the state of Minnesota since Kevin McHale. This team finished 10th in the league in rebounding margin (minus-2.4). Przybilla's arrival will force Kyle Sanden to play some power forward. Sanden battled health problems last year, but he's bigger and stronger. Antoine Broxsie is a bona fide center who excels at blocking shots. Broxsie, who has bulked up, also possesses a nice shooting touch. Miles Tarver, who thrived coming off the bench, is a blue-collar-type and hounding defender. Prospects look good on the wing, where versatile Quincy Lewis, an all-NIT selection, should pick up where NBA draft pick Sam Jacobson left off. Clem Haskins, who coached the Goodwill Games team last summer, is excited about freshman Nick Sinville, who reminds many of former Gopher Richard Coffey.

Backcourt: Kevin Clark, the most valuable player of the NIT, is starting to look like Bobby Jackson. Clark was a big reason for the Gophers' late-season surge to the NIT title. But who'll replace dependable Eric Harris at the point? Terrance Simmons, who played in 29 games as a freshman at LSU? Mitch Ohnstad, the '96 Minnesota Mr. Basketball who started 24 games two seasons ago for Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo? Whomever it is will have trouble matching Harris' 2-to-1 assist-to-turnover ratio.

Key to success: The development of Przybilla. Not to apply too much pressure to one so young, but Przybilla could be the difference between a good seed in the NCAA Tournament and no seed.

Outlook: The trend definitely is up. The last time the Gophers played in the NIT, they made the Final Four the next season.

Golden Gophers Data

Coach: Clem Haskins (223-154, 12 years; 324-227 overall, 18 years; 11-7 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 20-15. Big Ten: 6-10/8th. Beat Penn State in NIT title game.
Starters lost (2): Sam Jacobson, F/G (18.2 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 72.7 FT%, 1.3 spg, 31.1 mpg); Eric Harris, G (13.6 ppg, 45.1 FG%, 79.1 FT%, 38.9 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 2.1 spg, 34.9 mpg).
Others lost: Rob Schoenrock, F.
Starters returning (3): Kevin Clark, G, 6-2/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 76.1 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 27.9 mpg); Quincy Lewis, F, 6-7/Sr. (14.5 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 1.9 spg, 1.4 bpg, 29.8 mpg); Kyle Sanden, F/C, 6-11/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 49.2 FG%, 60.0 3-pt%, 17.0 mpg).
Other returnees: Antoine Broxsie, C, 6-10/Soph. (52.6 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 10.1 mpg); Kevin Nathaniel, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (11.5 mpg); Jason Stanford, F, 6-6/Sr.; Jermaine Stanford, F, 6-6/Sr.; Miles Tarver, F, 6-8/Sr. (4.4



JAY CRIBFIELD / SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHIC INC.

Lewis will provide Minnesota with ample scoring and athletic ability on the wing.

ppg, 6.3 rpg, 26.6 mpg).
Top newcomers: John Aune, C, 6-9/Fr. (RS); Kevin Burleson, G, 6-3/Fr.; Greg Halbert, F, 6-8/Fr.; Ryan Keating, G, 5-11/Fr.; Mitch Ohnstad, G, 6-2/Soph. (transfer/Cal Poly-SLO); Joel Przybilla, C, 7-0/Fr.; Dusty Rychart, F, 6-7/Fr. (RS); Terrance Simmons, G, 6-3/Soph. (transfer/LSU); Nick Sinville, F, 6-6/Fr.
Last league title: 1997.
Last NCAA appearance: 1997.
Site: Minneapolis. **Home court:** Williams Arena (14,625).

4. PENN STATE

Frontcourt: Calvin Booth, the league's defensive player of the year last season, isn't the greatest scorer. Even though he has picked up his rebounding, he's still about as physical as a box of tissues. But when Booth (a Goodwill Games team member) is in the paint, the foes think twice about bringing it strong. That doesn't mean Booth, about to become the Big Ten's career blocks leader, is the main cog back there. No, the main cog is Jarrett Stephens, a senior who was enjoying one of the sneakiest good years in college basketball until he blew out a knee in the NIT semifinals. Stephens led the Big Ten in field-goal percentage (64.0) and was among the leaders in rebounds and steals. Carl Jackson does the dirty work, and Gyasi Cline-Heard is one of the team's most athletic forwards. Three freshmen—Tyler Smith, Rob Walls and Stephan Bekale—add depth.

Backcourt: Subtract Pete Lisicky and add Dan Earl, who was granted a sixth season of eligibility after a back problem sidelined him last season. It all means the Nittany Lions are back where they started—in good shape. Earl joins Joe Crispin, who shot 88 percent from the line. While this isn't the flashiest

duo, it ranks as one of the most fundamentally sound. But only if Earl stays healthy. Titus Ivory is the Nittany Lions' defensive stopper. He also is a developing offensive talent. Coaches hope Greg Grays builds on his solid performance in the NIT.

Keys to success: The x-factor is Stephens. Will his knee be ready to go? Had Stephens been healthy for the NIT final, the Nittany Lions might be the reigning champs, not Minnesota. He'll need six to nine months to recover, which is pushing it if coach Jerry Dunn wants him ready for the preseason. If Stephens is his old self for the Big Ten season, the Lions could return to the NCAA Tournament. If not, see you at the NIT. Maybe.

Outlook: This is a program on the rebound. The roster is stocked with sound players who contributed last season. The Lions won five of their last seven heading into the first Big Ten tourney. A first-division finish is well within reach.

Nittany Lions Data

Coach: Jerry Dunn (50-37, 3 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 19-13. Big Ten: 8-8/7th. Lost to Minnesota in NIT title game.
Starters lost (1): Pete Lisicky, G (15.6 ppg, 89.1 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 3.5 apg, 1.1 spg, 32.3 mpg).
Others lost: Greg Stevenson, G (transfer).
Starters returning (4): Calvin Booth, C, 6-11/Sr. (11.8 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 53.1 FG%, 4.4 bpg); Joe Crispin, G, 6-1/Soph. (9.6 ppg, 88.0 FT%, 3.3 apg, 28.0 mpg); Titus Ivory, G, 6-4/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 74.3 FT%, 36.0 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 20.0 mpg); Carl Jackson, F, 6-9/Jr. (57.1 FG%, 9.6 mpg).
Other returnees: Gyasi Cline-Heard, F, 6-7/Soph. (63.0 FG%, 10.2 mpg); Dan Earl, G, 6-4/Sr. (8.4 ppg, 51.9 FG%, 38.9 3-pt%, 3.8 apg, 24.6 mpg; RS/back); Greg Grays, G, 6-0/Soph. (6.0 ppg, 86.8 FT%, 18.4 mpg); Jarrett Stephens, F, 6-7/Sr. (13.9 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 64.0 FG%, 69.2 FT%, 1.5 spg, 27.2 mpg); Scott Witkowski, C, 7-0/Soph.
Top newcomers: Stephan Bekale, F/C, 6-9/Fr.; Tyler Smith, F, 6-8/Fr.; Rob Walls, F, 6-5/Fr.
Last league title: 1977 (tie, Atlantic 10 Western).
Last NCAA appearance: 1996.
Site: State College, Pa. **Home court:** Bryce Jordan Center (15,261).

5. INDIANA

Frontcourt: Thin city. Andrae Patterson came on strong at the 11th hour of his career—strong enough to be selected in the NBA draft—but largely was a disappointment. If nothing else, the Hoosiers will miss his muscle. Luke Recker is a wonderfully versatile swingman, no matter what Bob Knight sometimes indicates. William Gladness is a hard-nosed power forward. And it's a good thing, because after these two guys, there's lots of room on the dance floor. Larry Richardson, who can best be called workmanlike, is back. He'll be joined by Lynn Washington, a JC transfer noted for his rebounding. If Jason Collier wasn't the answer at center, redshirt freshman Kirk Haston is? Unlikely. Kyle Hornsby, a freshman long-range bomber from Louisiana, should help, but not where the Hoosiers need it most.

Backcourt: Knight will hand the ball to sharp-shooting McDonald's All-American

Dane Fife, whose brother Dugan played at Michigan, on the first day of practice and let the freshman run the show. This will free up extremely talented junior A.J. Guyton to shake loose offensively. Michael Lewis is a smart player who knows how to dish; he also can shoot. Throw in Luke Jimenez and Rob Turner, and the Hoosiers have plenty of experience at guard. An intriguing addition is hiccup-quick Antwaan Randle El, a wonderfully talented prep guard who failed to qualify last season. But his arrival will be delayed as he plays football.

Key to success: Unless somebody steps forward and flexes some biceps, the Hoosiers again will be dominated physically by the better teams.

Outlook: The vaunted senior class of '98, the one that was supposed to lift Indiana back into the Final Four, is gone, which is just as well. For the first time since 1994, the Hoosiers won an NCAA Tournament game. They blew a 19-point lead before beating Oklahoma in overtime, but a win is a win is a win. And they didn't shrivel up and die after Collier left for Georgia Tech. Don't expect a return to the glory years, don't expect another title, but Knight has put together a quick, athletic team that can shoot and will be difficult to press. Indiana could win a game or two in the NCAA Tournament.

Hoosiers Data

Coach: Bob Knight (618-220, 27 years; 720-270 overall, 33 years; 41-19 NCAA Tournament record; won titles in 1976, '81, '87).

1997-98 record: 20-12. Big Ten: 9-7/T5th. Lost to Connecticut in NCAA East second round.

Starters lost (1): Andrae Patterson, F (12.6 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 49.5 FG%, 79.3 FT%, 25.5 mpg).

Others lost: Jason Collier, C (first-semester transfer/Georgia Tech); Robbie Eggers, F; Richard Mandeville, C; Charlie Miller, F (73.5 FT%, 13.2 mpg).

Starters returning (4): William Gladness, F, 6-8/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 54.2 FG%, 1.3 spg, 24.8 mpg); A.J. Guyton, G, 6-1/Jr. (16.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 76.6 FT%, 43.9 3-pt%, 3.7 apg, 1.2 spg, 34.0 mpg); Michael Lewis, G, 6-1/Jr. (6.2 ppg, 49.0 FG%, 83.2 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%); Luke Recker, F/G, 6-6/Soph. (12.8 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 78.1 FT%, 36.2 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 29.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Luke Jimenez, G, 6-3/Jr. (52.6 FG%, 48.8 3-pt%, 12.9 mpg); Larry Richardson, F, 6-8/Jr.; Rob Turner, G, 6-4/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 50.3 FG%, 18.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Dane Fife, G, 6-4/Fr.; Tom Geyer, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS); Kirk Haston, F, 6-10/Fr. (RS); Kyle Hornsby, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Jarrod Odle, F, 6-8/Fr.; Antwaan Randle El, G, 5-11/Soph. (Prop 48); Lynn Washington, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1993.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1985.

Site: Bloomington, Ind. **Home court:** Assembly Hall (17,357).

6. IOWA

Frontcourt: Two years ago, Jess Settles declared for the NBA draft, only to change his mind and return for his senior season. A bad back limited his play and knocked him completely out of the following season. But here he is, still looming in the background, waiting to learn if the NCAA will grant him a sixth year. Even if he gets it, he may not be healthy enough to play. With NBA draft picks Ryan Bowen and Ricky Davis won-



Koch, part of a young front line, has offensive flair, but he is as spindly as a newborn colt.

dering when they'll be able to cash their first paychecks, Settles and Sam Okey remain long-shot hopes in Iowa City. Okey, the troubled transfer from Wisconsin, hasn't been able to put his off-court difficulties behind him. If he doesn't get the boot after pleading guilty to drunk driving, he could be eligible by the second semester. At one time, the thought of Settles and Okey in the same lineup evoked visions of Big Ten

titles. Believe it when you see it. Joey Range, Rod Thompson and Duez Henderson give the Hawkeyes three fine freshman forward prospects. Range is the most hyped of the newcomers. Guy Rucker is hoping to rebound from a gruesome sophomore belly flop. J.R. Koch has offensive flair but is as spindly as a newborn colt.

Backcourt: Dean Oliver came on strong at the end of his freshman year and left little doubt he will be a solid Big Ten player. Kent McCausland, a sweet-shooting student of the game who paced the nation by hitting 52.2 percent of his 3-point shots last season, probably will start at off-guard. If not, Ryan Luehrmann will team with Oliver to give the Hawkeyes a real smurf flavor.

Keys to success: The fans are excited about the kids. Tom Davis, the first lame-duck Big Ten coach since Jud Heathcote, recruited a top 25 class. If Range, Thompson or Henderson fill the void left by Ricky Davis and Bowen, the fans will be happy and Dr. Tom will leave with a bang, not a quack.

Outlook: Davis is in the last year of a contract that will not be extended. In his first season at Iowa, 1986-87, the Hawkeyes won 30 games and nearly made the Final Four. A top four finish in the Big Ten would be a reasonable send-off.

Hawkeyes Data

Coach: Tom Davis (249-130, 12 years; 523-280 overall, 27 years; 16-10 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-11. Big Ten: 9-7/T5th. Lost to Georgia in NIT first round.

Starters lost (3): Ryan Bowen, F (14.4 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 60.3 FG%, 53.3 3-pt%, 2.5 spg, 1.3 bpg, 27.5 mpg); Ricky Davis, F/G (15.0 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 1.2 spg, 26.6 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Darryl Moore, F (7.1 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 45.0 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 22.5 mpg).

Others lost: Greg Helmers, C; Vernon Simmons, F. **Starters returning (2):** Kent McCausland, G, 6-2/Sr. (9.6 ppg, 45.3 FG%, 91.4 FT%, 46.0 3-pt%, 23.8 mpg); Dean Oliver, G, 5-11/Soph. (8.8 ppg, 76.2 FT%, 4.2 apg, 1.4 spg, 25.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Kyle Galloway, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 76.2 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 12.5 mpg); J.R. Koch, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (6.9 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 60.0 FG%, 72.7 FT%, 47.1 3-pt%, 16.1 mpg); Ryan Luehrmann, G, 6-1/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 39.0 3-pt%, 3.7 apg, 1.3 spg, 18.7 mpg); Guy Rucker, C, 6-9/Jr. (6.6 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 17.1 mpg); Jess Settles, F, 6-7/Sr. (RS/injuries; petitioning for sixth year of eligibility).

Top newcomers: Duez Henderson, F, 6-7/Fr.; Jake Jaacks, F, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Sam Okey, F, 6-7/Sr. (transfer/Wisconsin; may be eligible second semester); Jason Price, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Antonio Ramos, C, 7-2/Fr.; Joey Range, F/G, 6-4/Fr.; Rod Thompson, F, 6-6/Fr.

Last league title: 1979 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Iowa City. **Home court:** Carver-Hawkeye (15,500).

7. WISCONSIN

Frontcourt: Sean Daugherty (graduated) and Sam Okey (transferred to Iowa) are gone, which means youth will rule. Andy Kowske and Mark Vershaw had fine debut seasons. Kowske, a relentless scrapper who worked on his shot in the offseason, has star potential. Vershaw is multi-skilled, but he needs to get stronger. Maurice Linton hit the winning shot against Penn State in a Big Ten tournament game. But where's the depth? Unless new-

comers such as redshirt freshman Charlie Wills and true freshman Maurice Sessoms come through, this could be one of the thinnest front lines in the league.

Backcourt: As deep as the frontcourt is shallow. Start with Sean Mason, whose long history of knee woes seem to be behind him. He averaged 22.4 points in his final five games before the Big Ten tourney. Proceed to Ty Calderwood, who sat out last season with a balky knee. Calderwood, in case you forgot, led the league in steals in 1996-97; he will be one of the best point guards in the Big Ten. Then you have Mike Kelley (yet another freshman who made a contribution), David Burkemper, Duany Duany (who can swing to small forward) and Hennssy Auriantal, who plays tough defense. This is a solid group.

Key to success: Having allowed a Big Ten-low 62.6 points a contest last season, the Badgers have the defensive phase of the game down. It's the other end of the court they can't master. Master? How about competence? Wisconsin averaged a league-low 60.5 points per game, which isn't just unacceptable, it's embarrassing. Sooner or later, coach Dick Bennett must show he has a clue offensively. These are all his players, finally, so now would be a good time for a demonstration.

Outlook: What do you say about a team that scored 10 points in the first half of a Big Ten tournament game against Illinois and 51 in the second? You say this team doesn't need a bench, it needs a couch. And a shrink to go with it. Maybe Calderwood will help. If he does, this team could easily double its Big Ten victory total of three. If not, this team will be lucky to make the NIT.

Badgers Data

Coach: Dick Bennett (47-44, 3 years; 407-233 overall, 22 years; 1-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 12-19. Big Ten: 3-13/T9th.

Starters lost (1): Sean Daugherty, F (10.8 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 44.3 FG%, 71.4 FT%, 26.4 mpg).

Others lost: Booker Coleman, F (3.0 rpg, 57.8 FG%, 14.4 mpg); Brian Vraney, F.

Starters returning (4): Hennssy Auriantal, G, 6-1/Sr. (7.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 1.7 spg, 26.2 mpg); Mike Kelley, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 78.9 FT%, 1.9 spg, 28.0 mpg); Andy Kowske, F, 6-8/Soph. (5.1 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 49.6 FG%, 18.8 mpg); Sean Mason, G, 6-2/Sr. (15.5 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 81.5 FT%, 28.5 mpg).

Other returnees: David Burkemper, G, 6-1/Sr. (12.4 mpg); Ty Calderwood, G, 6-0/Sr. (RS/knee); Duany Duany, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 14.6 mpg); Maurice Linton, F, 6-8/Soph. (9.8 mpg); Mark Vershaw, F, 6-9/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 40.0 3-pt%, 20.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jon Bryant, G, 6-2/Jr. (transfer/St. Cloud St.); Travon Davis, G, 5-10/Fr.; John Moriarity, G, 6-5/Fr. (RS); Maurice Sessoms, F, 6-8/Fr.; Charlie Wills, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS).

Last league title: 1947.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Madison, Wis. **Home court:** Kohl Center (17,142).

8. OHIO STATE

Frontcourt: Scoring machine Michael Redd, the league freshman of the year and the first freshman in Big Ten history to lead the conference in scoring, is listed as an off-guard, but he's really more of a forward, get-

ting most of his points from 15 feet and in. He rebounds more like a forward, too, grabbing a team-high 6.5 a game while pacing the club with 61 steals. That's good, because athletic Jason Singleton isn't a monster on the boards. The Buckeyes desperately need help on the glass. Ken Johnson, who excels at blocking shots, is big enough. So far, though, he seems stuck in the project stage. Jon Sanderson started 28 games as a freshman and averaged 14.8 points over the last eight games. He has a nice shooting touch. Shamar Herron has the bulk and potential to be a force down low. George Reese, a JC transfer, provides depth.

Backcourt: Scoonie Penn, a 5-10 water-bug transfer from Boston College, is the great slight hope. The Big East Tournament MVP two seasons back, Penn followed coach Jim O'Brien to Ohio State and will be counted on to help the Buckeyes back to respectability. For a while, it looked as if he would be teaming with Damon Stringer, but no. Hey, it wouldn't be an offseason if at least one Buckeye wasn't booted after problems with the law. Stringer missed last season, then left to play at Cleveland State. Neshawn Coleman, who could leave as the most prolific 3-point shooter in school history, finished strong last season. This unit would have been even better had Doylan Robinson, the Buckeyes' top signee, been academically eligible.

Keys to success: A little less Redd and a little more Scarlet and Gray. The one-man team concept is doomed to failure. If Redd's scoring slips slightly, that could be a good sign. It could mean his supporting cast is improved. While they're at it, the Buckeyes had better do something about that abysmal 57.5 free-throw percentage.

Outlook: With Penn-like point guard play last season, Ohio State's losing streak never would have reached 17. During the skid, the Buckeyes lost several close games. In close games, a player like Penn could make the difference. The Buckeyes, who will play in the new \$105 million Schottenstein Center, might not make the NCAA tourney but there should be more room between them and the cellar.

Buckeyes Data

Coach: Jim O'Brien (8-22, 1 year; 243-239 overall, 16 years; 5-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 8-22. Big Ten: 1-15/11th.

Starters lost (1): Carlos Davis, G (8.8 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 4.2 apg, 1.3 spg, 34.0 mpg).

Others lost: Damon Stringer, G (transfer/Cleveland State).

Starters returning (4): Ken Johnson, C, 6-11/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 1.9 bpg, 27.0 mpg); Michael Redd, G, 6-5/Soph. (21.9 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 3.0 apg, 2.0 spg, 37.9 mpg); Jon Sanderson, F/G, 6-7/Soph. (9.1 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 31.5 mpg); Jason Singleton, F/G, 6-6/Sr. (10.7 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 36.1 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 30.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Neshawn Coleman, G, 6-3/Sr. (6.5 ppg, 73.9 FT%, 23.4 mpg); Shamar Herron, F, 6-9/Soph. (47.5 FG%, 10.7 mpg); Kwadjo Steele, F, 6-6/Jr.; John Lumpkin, C, 6-8/Sr.

Top newcomers: Brian Brown, G, 6-3/Fr.; Will Dudley, F, 6-8/Fr.; Scoonie Penn, G, 5-10/Jr. (transfer/Boston College); George Reese, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Slobodan "Boban" Savovic, G, 6-5/Fr.

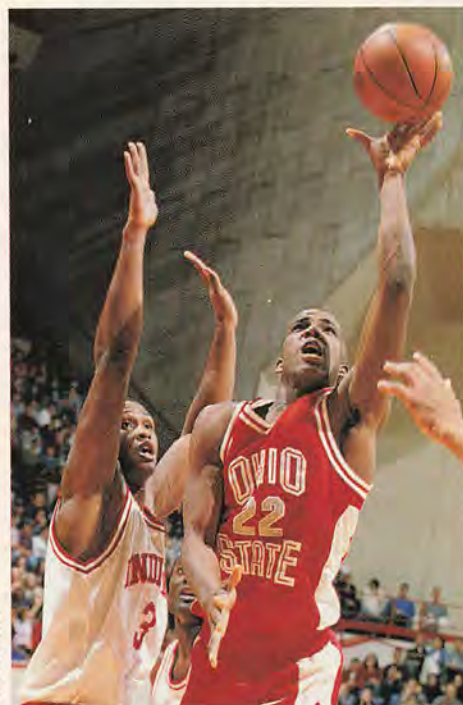
Last league title: 1992.

Last NCAA appearance: 1992.

Site: Columbus, Ohio. **Home court:** Schottenstein Center (19,500).

9. ILLINOIS

Frontcourt: Let's start with Sergio McClain, the Illini's leading returning scorer—at 3.5 points per game. Got to start somewhere, right? The swingman was no Ricky Davis, Luke Recker or Michael Redd as a freshman, but he did prove he can play in the Big Ten. After McClain, there's, well, let's see, there's ... how about JC transfer Fess Hawkins at center. At 280 pounds, Hawkins should give the Illini some much-needed substance in the paint. Transfer Carvell Ammons should be ready to play after averaging 8.3 points per game for Northwestern two years ago. Victor Chukwudebe, the only sophomore on the



If Redd's scoring is down, it will be a good thing, as the Buckeyes need better balance.

team last season, proved to be a solid rebounder. Freshmen Robert Archibald (a native of Scotland), Damir Krupalija (a native of Bosnia) and Lucas Johnson (the brother of departed senior Brian Johnson) are possibilities. With seven seniors gone from last year, the towel guy is a possibility.

Backcourt: No Kevin Turner, no Matt Heldman, no Jerry Hester. The top three scorers ... worth 43.4 points a game ... gone. The much-heralded Frankie Williams, Illinois' Mr. Basketball last season, failed to qualify academically, so the point belongs to Cory Bradford, who was a partial qualifier last season. Bradford is a dynamic talent who could make a major impact. Cleotis Brown, another JC transfer, should start at the other guard. Eventually, someone will have to lead the Illini in scoring. It could be Brown. Awwee



JAY CRIBFIELD / SHUTTERSTOCK PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

The Wildcats need to provide Eschmeyer, one of the nation's best big men, with help.

Storey transferred to Arizona State, but Arias Davis remains in reserve.

Key to success: If Lon Kruger can remember everybody's name, he'll be ahead of the game. Losing 84 percent of his scoring, Kruger hasn't seen so many new faces since he arrived from Florida two years ago. On paper, he seems to have good players. But how will those paper lions play on hardwood?

Outlook: Before the season a year ago, everybody knew the Illini and nobody liked their chances. They tied Michigan State for the title. This year, nobody knows the Illini, and more people seem to like their chances. This is the Big Ten mystery team of the decade. Because mystery meat rarely wins in this league, a first-division finish is doubtful.

Fighting Illini Data

Coach: Lon Kruger (45-20, 2 years; 282-205 overall, 16 years; 10-8 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 23-10. Big Ten: 13-3/T1st. Lost to Maryland in NCAA West second round.

Starters lost (5): Jarrod Gee, F (8.5 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 52.3 FG%, 24.1 mpg); Matt Heldman, G (10.9 ppg, 86.0 FT%, 40.6 3-pt%, 4.0 apg, 1.3 spg, 36.5 mpg); Jerry Hester, F (14.7 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 47.1 FG%, 77.1 FT%, 35.1 3-pt%, 31.6 mpg); Brian Johnson, F (7.0 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 58.9 FG%, 27.8 mpg); Kevin Turner, G (17.7 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 36.8 FG%, 1.3 spg, 33.2 mpg).

Others lost: Jelani Boline, G; David Freeman, G; Awvee Storey, G/F (transfer/Arizona State).

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: Rich Beyers, F, 6-8/Soph.; Victor Chukwudebe, F, 6-7/Jr. (3.3 rpg, 13.1 mpg); Arias Davis, G, 6-2/Sr.; Sergio McClain, G/F, 6-3/Soph. (3.1 rpg, 1.2 spg, 16.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: Carvell Ammons, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Northwestern); Robert Archibald, F/C, 6-10/Fr.; Cory Bradford, G, 6-2/Soph. (Prop 48); Cleotis Brown, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Fess Hawkins, C, 6-9/Soph. (JC); Lucas

Johnson, F, 6-7/Fr.; Damir Krupalija, F, 6-8/Fr.

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Champaign, Ill. **Home court:** Assembly Hall (16,450).

10. NORTHWESTERN

Frontcourt: Evan Eschmeyer, the only unanimous member of the All-Big Ten team last year, is a frontcourt by himself. Having petitioned for and won a sixth year of eligibility, Eschmeyer—who has battled foot problems throughout his career—paced the league in rebounding and ranked second in scoring. He is set to make another run at player of the year honors. The Wildcats have to replace Joe Branch's defense but should have little trouble replacing his offense. Freshmen Tavaras Hardy and Steve Lepore will get a chance to fill that vacancy. Joe Harmsen returns at the other forward but could be pressed by Aron Molnar, who came on strong toward the end of the season. Danny Allouche, a sharpshooter who is eligible after transferring from Missouri, could get quality minutes.

Backcourt: Julian Bonner was out of position at the point last season, but he rarely left the court, finishing as one of the league's top assist men. Kevin O'Neill will turn the position over to freshman David Newman, a natural-born floor leader, but he might need Bonner and Sean Wink on the floor for help. Only Michigan's Louis Bullock made more 3-pointers among Big Ten players than Wink, who set a school single-season record last year by draining 86. Nate Pomeday started the first nine games before hurting his knee, so O'Neill won't want for experience.

Key to success: What else? More help for the big guy. Come on, Wildcats. How can you expect to win when two players (Eschmeyer and Wink) represent 56 percent of your offense? Everybody's back except Branch, but is that good?

Outlook: For the first time in 15 years, the Wildcats won 10 games at home. The bad news is they didn't win a game away from Welsh-Ryan Arena. Northwestern had a shot at beating Minnesota in the Big Ten tourney, only to miss 14-of-29 free throws. What kind of team is that? One that will give O'Neill fits.

Wildcats Data

Coach: Kevin O'Neill (10-17, 1 year; 150-137 overall, 9 years; 2-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 10-17. Big Ten: 3-13/T9th.

Starters lost (1): Joe Branch, F (3.3 rpg, 27.1 mpg).

Others lost: Terence Avery, C (transfer/Indiana State).

Starters returning (4): Julian Bonner, G, 6-1/Sr. (9.0 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 1.1 spg, 38.9 mpg); Evan Eschmeyer, C, 6-11/Sr. (21.7 ppg, 10.7 rpg, 61.0 FG%, 37.6 mpg); Joe Harmsen, F, 6-9/Sr. (3.1 rpg, 52.3 FG%, 16.4 mpg); Sean Wink, G, 6-2/Soph. (12.1 ppg, 74.2 FT%, 45.7 3-pt%, 33.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Napoleon Harris, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.9 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 15.4 mpg); Aron Molnar, C, 6-11/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 51.9 FG%, 18.0 mpg); Nate Pomeday, G, 6-3/Sr. (17.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Danny Allouche, G, 6-5/Sr. (transfer/Missouri); Collier Drayton, G, 6-3/Fr.; Tavaras Hardy, F, 6-7/Fr.; Steve Lepore, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; David Newman, G, 6-0/Fr.

Last league title: 1933 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Evanston, Ill. **Home court:** Welsh-Ryan Arena (8,117).

11. MICHIGAN

Frontcourt: Nobody you ever heard of. Seriously, the Wolverines go from one of the most talented front lines in college basketball to one of the least experienced. Robert Traylor and Maceo Baston were taken in the NBA draft. Jerod Ward will end up playing for money somewhere. They likely will be replaced in the lineup by Brandon Smith and Josh Asselin, both sophomores, and Leon Jones or Chris Young, both freshmen. First off the bench will be whoever doesn't start. And that about does it. Peter Vignier is the only other scholarship forward or center on the team. Anybody out there with eligibility left?

Backcourt: Thin frontcourt, but a top-notch guard duo. At least Brian Ellerbe can breathe easily when he looks at Louis Bullock and Robbie Reid. Good thing, because they're the only guards he has. Nobody has a sweeter stroke than Bullock, and you can expect him to use it. If he doesn't lead the league in field-goal attempts, notify the authorities. Reid is another senior with a good eye. After a slow start, the BYU transfer got the hang of it down the stretch and played a big role in Michigan's Big Ten tourney title. If Bullock and Reid get tired or into foul trouble ... well, they can't get tired or into foul trouble.

Key to success: Finding enough players to hold practice.

Outlook: Thanks to the uncertainty surrounding Ellerbe's status as coach, which absolutely derailed recruiting, the Fab Five has turned into the Fading Few. Not only is most of the talent gone, but the Wolverines are also without their ace recruiter of the past 10 years, Brian Dutcher, who resigned ... or was pushed out, depending on whom you talk to. Any team with Bullock in the backcourt should not be struggling to stay out of the cellar, but this isn't any team. It's a disaster area.

Wolverines Data

Coach: Brian Ellerbe (25-9, 1 year; 59-56 overall, 3 years; 1-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 25-9. Big Ten: 11-5/4th. Lost to UCLA in NCAA South second round.

Starters lost (3): Maceo Baston, F (12.7 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 59.0 FG%, 1.1 bpg, 27.0 mpg); Jerod Ward, F (13.1 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 37.9 3-PT FG%, 28 mpg); Robert Traylor, C (16.2 ppg, 10.1 rpg, 2.6 apg, 57.9 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 1.3 spg, 32 mpg; declared for NBA draft).

Others lost: Travis Conlan, G (5.3 ppg, 4.2 apg, 1.6 spg, 40.5 3-PT FG%, 30 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Louis Bullock, G, 6-3/Sr. (17.1 ppg, 2.9 apg, 91.3 FT%, 44.9 3-PG FG%, 1.6 spg, 3.4 apg, 33 mpg); Robbie Reid, G, 6-1/Sr. (8.2 ppg, 3.4 apg, 1.1 spg, 86.7 FT%, 42.3 3-PT FG%, 30 mpg).

Other returnees: Josh Asselin, C/F, 6-11/Soph. (12.0 mpg); Ron Oliver, G, 6-0/Sr.; Donte' Scott, G, 6-2/Soph.; Brandon Smith, F, 6-7/Soph. (3.2 ppg, 44.0 3-PT FG%, 9.0 mpg); Erik Szynldar, F, 6-6/Sr.; Darius Taylor, G/F, 6-4/Sr.; Peter Vignier, C, 6-11/Jr.

Top newcomers: Leon Jones, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Chris Young, C/F, 6-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1986.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Ann Arbor, Mich. **Home court:** Crisler Arena (13,562).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: DePaul. After managing a combined 10 wins the past two seasons, the Blue Demons will be one of the most skilled and athletic teams in Conference USA—and one of the most inexperienced squads in the nation. It's uncertain how good this club will be, but it no doubt will be better.

Descending: Tulane. The transfer of power forward Chris Owens to Texas after his freshman year was indicative of how much Tulane has deteriorated. Recruiting this past year was uneventful and unproductive. All this as the school plans to move to a 20,000-seat arena.

Biggest sneakers to fill: Saint Louis guard Larry Hughes. If he had stuck around another season, C-USA would have been one of the nation's top three conferences and SLU would have challenged for a Top 25 ranking. Freshman Charles Cranford is one candidate to fill Hughes' spot.

Most underrated player: UAB forward Fred Williams. Somehow, in a league that places 15 players on its all-conference teams, Williams managed not to be included last season. He isn't spectacular, but he plays tough against the best teams, doesn't take silly shots and probably deserved to play more last season.

Most overrated player: Louisville forward Nate Johnson. After a fine freshman season, Johnson showed up out of shape and let down his team, which needed him to star. There isn't much Johnson can't do, but one never knows if he'll do it.

Coach on the hot seat: Tulane's Perry Clark. He built the program from a dead start, but lately it has been headed back in that direction. The Wave failed to make the NCAA Tournament in Jerald Honeycutt's last two years and don't even have such worries now.

Best bets: Coverage of the Conference USA tournament in Birmingham will compete for newspaper space with stories about spring football practice. ... Chicago fans will rediscover DePaul basketball, which will please them. They also will rediscover the Rosemont Horizon, which will not. ... The scores that will mean most to Memphis fans during the first month of the season will be those guards Detric Golden and Jimmie Hunter achieve in their first-semester classes. ... Houston coach Clyde Drexler will wish he could get one victory for every autograph he signs. ... Southern Miss guard Neil Reed will get yelled at a lot less than he's used to. ... UNCC redshirt freshman forward Charles Hayward's return to the court after battling leukemia last winter will be the season's most spectacular moment.

Odds and ends: Louisville hasn't missed the tournament in consecutive seasons under coach Denny Crum, who is heading into his 28th year. It may happen this season. ... DePaul has gone two seasons in a row without a scholarship player shooting at least 44 percent. ... Along with a coach, Clyde Drexler, who was rated one of the NBA's 50 top players of all time, Houston has the sons of two others on that list: guard Gee Gervin, son of George; and Moses Malone Jr. Gervin is a 6-2 guard who transferred from a JC. Malone is a 6-5 freshman guard.



Jarrod Lovette looks to extend Marquette's string of 20-victory seasons to seven.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. DePaul. (G Quentin Richardson). Pat Kennedy's coaching staff took advantage of a great year for talented, qualified prospects in Chicago. Richardson, a dynamic 6-6 athlete who can slash and shoot, and 6-7 forward Bobby Simmons, who some compare to Scottie Pippen, give the Blue Demons two wing scoring options, while 6-9 power forward Lance Williams provides strength inside. Point guard Kerry Hartfield, a JC transfer, could lift this class beyond greatness merely by providing solid leadership and allowing the freshmen to shine.
2. Cincinnati (F Pete Miceal).
3. Memphis (F Paris London).
4. South Florida (G/F B.B. Waldon).
5. Marquette (G Cordell Henry).
6. Saint Louis (G Charles Cranford).
7. Louisville (F Dion Edward).
8. UAB (G Eric Holmes).
9. UNC Charlotte (G Jobey Thomas).
10. Houston (G Moses Malone Jr.).
11. Southern Miss (G Tobias Brinkley).
12. Tulane (G Wade Mason).

BY MIKE DECOURCY
Cincinnati Enquirer

PREDICTIONS

AMERICAN DIVISION

1. Cincinnati
2. Saint Louis
3. DePaul
4. Louisville
5. Marquette
6. UNC Charlotte

NATIONAL DIVISION

1. Memphis
2. UAB
3. South Florida
4. Southern Miss
5. Houston
6. Tulane

ALL-C-USA

FIRST TEAM

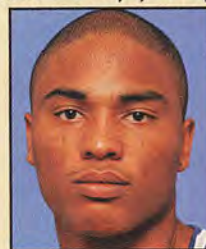
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
C	KENYON MARTIN, Cincinnati	6-8/230	Jr.
F	ALEX SANDERS, Louisville	6-7/260	Sr.
F	OMAR SNEED, Memphis	6-6/239	Sr.
G	NEIL REED, Southern Miss	6-2/190	Sr.
G	QUENTIN RICHARDSON, DePaul	6-6/215	Fr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	BYRON MOUTON, Tulane	xx	xx
C	JERMAINE OUSLEY, Memphis	6-9/238	Sr.
F	FRED WILLIAMS, UAB	6-8/220	Sr.
G	DETRIC GOLDEN, Memphis	5-10/159	Sr.
G	MELVIN LEVETT, Cincinnati	6-3/215	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

OMAR SNEED, F, Memphis



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

QUENTIN RICHARDSON, G, DePaul

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Diego Guevara, UNC Charlotte.

Best rebounder: Omar Sneed, Memphis.

Best playmaker: Cordell Henry, Marquette.

Best defender: Kenyon Martin, Cincinnati.

Best leaper: Melvin Levett, Cincinnati.

Most versatile: Galen Young, UNC Charlotte.

Most flamboyant: Jimmie Hunter, Memphis.

Best NBA prospect: Quentin Richardson, DePaul.



AMERICAN DIVISION

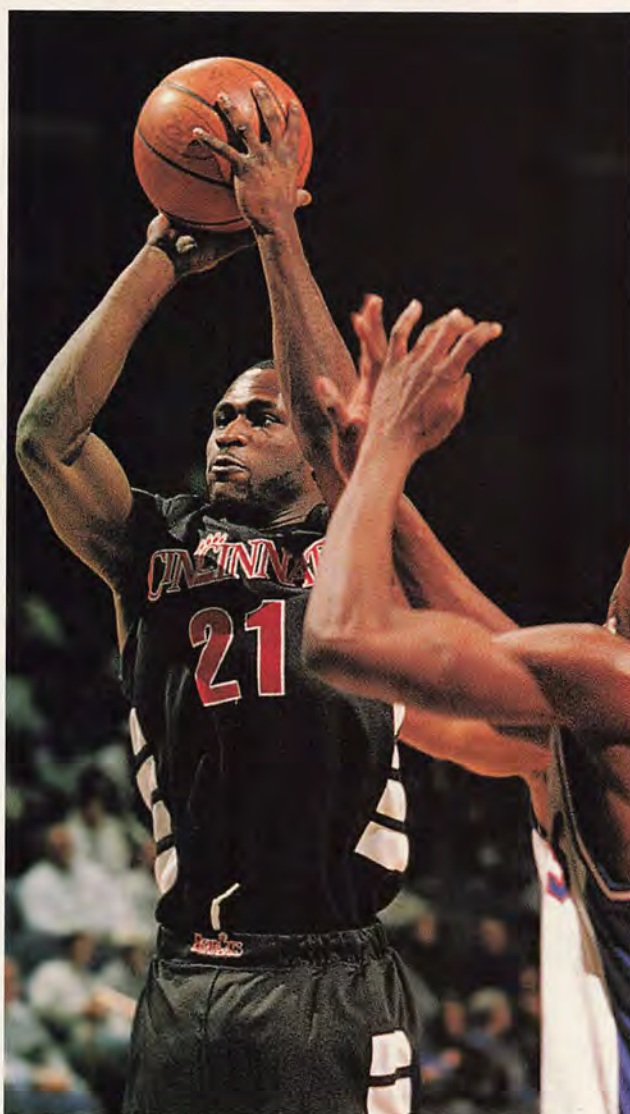
1. CINCINNATI

Frontcourt: No Fortson, no Patterson, no problem. If it weren't for size, skill and depth, the Bearcats' front line wouldn't have much to offer. The opening-day lineup should feature shot-blocking center Kenyon Martin, power forward Ryan Fletcher and small forward Pete Mickeal. At the semester break, Ohio State transfer Jermaine Tate will be eligible and challenge for playing time. Not much will be demanded of freshmen Donald Little and Eugene Land, which shows how good their teammates are. Martin's offseason improvements will dictate how much offense this team can generate; he was a better shooter than many recognized but needs more confidence for teammates to consider him a reliable weapon. Martin, who Bob Huggins calls the most athletic big man he has recruited at Cincinnati, is an aggressive rebounder whose presence in the paint dissuades foes from driving the lane. That skill was a big reason he earned C-USA Defensive Player of the Year honors. Fletcher has continued to blossom over his career and will be counted on to play an increased role this season. He has added strength and size to his underrated package of athleticism. Coaches are especially excited about Mickeal, a JC transfer who is the best player in a touted recruiting class. He can drill the long shot, but his explosiveness and quickness make him deadly around the hoop. Mickeal's all-out style and winning ways—teams he has played for are 130-5 over the past four seasons—will endear him to Huggins. Tate started 41 games in 1½ seasons with the Buckeyes, earning team MVP honors as a freshman. That experience makes him a valuable newcomer. He is an effective shot blocker and inside scorer. While the skinny Little is a project, Land could make a splash this season. An average shooter, Land is a local product who possesses dynamic skills around the basket. Aaron McGhee, a sophomore who missed last year as an academic non-qualifier, could be the Bearcats' best perimeter player among the big men.

Backcourt: After watching his Bearcats fumble away a second-round NCAA Tournament game against West Virginia's press, Huggins gave up looking for an athletic point guard and decided to get guys who could dribble. He settled on freshman Steve Logan and JC transfer Alvin Mitchell, who increase by 200 percent the number of capable ballhandlers at UC. Logan is a touted signee who combines top-notch offensive skills with precision passing. He's also a good shooter. Mitchell, a teammate of Mickeal's at Indian Hills CC (Iowa) who played at Nebraska in 1996-97, is noted for his long-range shooting touch. His quickness also makes him effective on defense. The point guard job still belongs to Michael Horton, who penetrates and defends well when he's interested, but there'll be less tolerance of his shortcomings. Horton, who ranked second in C-USA in assists, has good court awareness and can turn up the heat defensively. Shooting guard Melvin Levett, nicknamed "Helicopter" because of his 39-inch vertical leap, is a solid scorer, sound shooter and great athlete, but he could play better in big games. Shawn Myrick, who can create off the dribble and possesses a quick release, adds depth.

Key to success: Mickeal wants to be a leader, needs to be a leader, and the Bearcats need to accept him even though he's a first-year player. They have more experienced players, but no one who's a natural in that role.

Outlook: The Bearcats have their most depth since the Final Four team of 1991-92 but still have questions about their shooting. They also have the tools for another great defensive unit. They may struggle to score at first, but Logan could energize the offense with his shooting and fast-break skills. Cincinnati is in the comfortable position of being capable of another top 10 finish—only Kansas and Kentucky also can make that claim each of the past three years—while few expect such an achievement.



Levett, who is nicknamed the "Helicopter" because of his 39-inch vertical leap, is a solid scorer, sound shooter and great athlete.

Bearcats Data

Coach: Bob Huggins (219-77, 9 years; 387-149 overall, 17 years; 13-8 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 27-6. Conference USA American: 14-2/1st. Lost to West Virginia in NCAA West second round.

Starters lost (3): D'Juan Baker, G (13.4 ppg, 86.7 FT%, 37.0 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 30.0 mpg); Bobby Brannen, F (14.3 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 45.4 FG%, 84.2 FT%, 1.0 spg, 33.9 mpg); Ruben Patterson, F (16.5 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 47.2 FG%, 1.2 spg, 27.9 mpg).

Others lost: John Carson, G (transfer); Brent Petrus, G (12.1 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Michael Horton, G, 6-1/Sr. (6.0 ppg, 45.7 FG%, 4.8 apg, 1.9 spg, 25.4 mpg); Kenyon Martin, C, 6-8/Jr. (9.9 ppg, 8.9 rpg, 62.6 FG%, 1.0 spg, 2.8 bpg, 28.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Ryan Fletcher, F, 6-8/Jr. (3.0 rpg, 14.6 mpg); Melvin Levett, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (14.1 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 75.0 FT%, 37.8 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 29.8 mpg); Alex Meacham, G, 6-0/Sr.; Shawn Myrick, G, 6-0/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 14.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Eugene Land, F, 6-7/Fr.; Donald Little, C, 6-10/Fr.; Steve Logan, G, 5-10/Fr.; Aaron McGhee, F, 6-7/Soph. (Prop 48); Pete Mickeal, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Alvin Mitchell, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Jermaine Tate, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/Ohio State; eligible second semester).

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1991.

Site: Cincinnati. **Home court:** Myrl Shoemaker Center (13,176).

2. SAINT LOUIS

Frontcourt: It used to be that the Billikens functioned with five backcourt-sized players, but they've become one of the league's biggest squads. Chris Heinrich was not the smoothest freshman, but he works hard and should improve with experience. He's got another big body to practice against in freshman Chris Braun, and underrated Ryan Luechtefeld can teach Heinrich shortcuts to success. The most crucial element of the SLU front line is sophomore Matt Baniak, whose footwork and soft hands could make him dangerous in the post—if only he'll play meaner. Baniak is capable of doubling his scoring output, and that wouldn't hurt, especially with small forward being a weakness. If he's academically eligible, 6-6 sophomore Justin Tatum may join the team in December, but he should be rusty after sitting out last season.

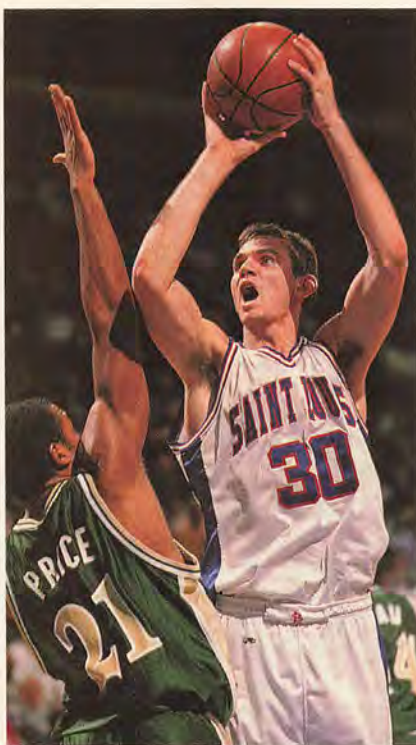
Backcourt: With mega-star Larry Hughes gone to the NBA after one year, SLU needs recruits Justin Love and Charles Cranford to make a quick impact. Cranford is a big guard, like Hughes. Expecting him to play as well would be foolish, but he does have some of that inside-out versatility. Love, a JC transfer, can play both backcourt spots. If each makes a quick adjustment, coach Charlie Spoonhour may employ three perimeter players, using those two in combination with Jamall Walker, who'll start at the point. Another to watch is Virgel Cobbin, a terrific shooter who moves from small forward to off-guard. Swingman Troy Robertson, the sharpshooting brother of Kansas' Ryan Robertson, and John Redden, a defensive force off the bench, offer depth.

Keys to success: Hughes was about all there was to the Billikens' offense last year, not just in scoring but in facilitating others. His former teammates can't lose the confidence they gained while playing with him, and they need to find some way to produce points. Getting the ball to Baniak seems like a good start.

Outlook: Who ever figured the key to a Charlie Spoonhour team would be front-line power? Having a solid inside game should give the new perimeter players time to grow comfortable, and greater depth will make this a better defensive team. There is no way to replace Hughes, but Saint Louis has the means to survive his loss.

Billikens Data

Coach: Charlie Spoonhour (107-74, 6 years; 304-155 overall, 15 years; 3-8 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 22-11. Conference USA American: 11-5/3rd. Lost to Kentucky in NCAA South second round.
Starters lost (1): Larry Hughes, G (20.9 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 2.2 spg, 32.4 mpg; declared for NBA draft).
Others lost: Corey Frazier, G (4.8 ppg, 48.4 FG%, 15.8 mpg).
Starters returning (4): Matt Baniak, F/C, 6-9/Soph. (8.7 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 23.7 mpg); Virgel Cobbin, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 46.6 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 42.4 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 24.4 mpg); Ryan Luechtefeld, F, 6-8/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 70.9 FT%, 1.1 spg, 31.1 mpg); Jamall Walker, G, 6-0/Sr. (6.1 ppg, 3.9 apg, 1.3 spg, 30.4 mpg).
Other returnees: Chris Heinrich, C, 6-11/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 46.2 FG%, 15.2 mpg); John Redden, G,



Baniak's footwork and soft hands could make him a dangerous option in the post.

6-1/Jr. (1.6 spg, 16.6 mpg); Troy Robertson, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (75.0 FT%, 47.8 3-pt%, 12.7 mpg); Larry Simmons, F, 6-7/Jr. (11.6 mpg).
Top newcomers: Chris Braun, F, 6-10/Fr.; Charles Cranford, G, 6-5/Fr.; Drew Diener, G, 6-5/Fr.; Dave Fergerson, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Justin Love, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Justin Tatum, F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48; may be eligible second semester).
Last league title: 1957 (Missouri Valley).
Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.
Site: St. Louis. **Home court:** Kiel Center (20,000).

3. DEPAUL

Frontcourt: With freshman Lance Williams eligible, DePaul no longer will be the half-pint, quart-low operation it was last season. The Blue Demons now have the size to play at a decent pace without fear of being overwhelmed inside. Williams is a 230-pound tank, which will make lean Ayinde Avery more effective. DePaul also should get decent service out of Roman Peoples, who transferred from Northeastern Illinois after that school disbanded its program. When freshman small forward Bobby Simmons played for Syracuse's Jim Boheim in international competition over the summer, the coach sent a letter to DePaul's Pat Kennedy that said simply: "Simmons = Pippen." The Demons will take half that value. Lamar Butler, a JC transfer who began his career at Loyola (Md.), will be an enforcer inside. The newcomers likely will push Demarcus Gaines to the bench.

Backcourt: Freshman Quentin Richardson has the varied game to be among C-USA's top scorers and the nation's top freshmen. He is big, quick and makes shots from a variety of distances. Richardson is stronger than ex-Saint Louis star Larry Hughes, though

not as creative. The trick for DePaul will be to consistently get the ball to Richardson, Simmons and Williams. Willie Coleman will back up Richardson and get more time at the point, but Kennedy is counting on JC All-American Kerry Hartfield to run the offense. Hartfield has been more of a scoring point in the past, but DePaul doesn't need him to shoot as often. If he resists that job description, Coleman is capable of taking over, but DePaul will be diminished. Thomas Cooper is the most experienced Blue Demon.

Key to success: Hartfield has to be the goods at point guard. JC playmakers do not have a sparkling history in their first year of Division I. If Hartfield can be a sound leader and accept that those beside him will be the stars, DePaul continually will improve.

Outlook: The Blue Demons will have to survive a suicidal December schedule with enough confidence to challenge beatable teams. With such a young rotation, playing Kansas and Duke could destroy the Demons the same way Louisville imploded last year. But DePaul has better players. If the Demons can get through that difficult stretch, they will contend for a first-division finish and post-season spot.

Blue Demons Data

Coach: Pat Kennedy (7-23, 1 year; 333-213 overall, 18 years; 6-7 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 7-23. Conference USA American: 3-13/6th.
Starters lost (1): Jermaine Watts, G (15.9 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 3.8 apg, 2.5 spg, 36.7 mpg/left school).
Others lost: Innis Glover, F (5.0 ppg, 78.4 FT%, 18.2 mpg); Doc Taylor, G/F (5.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 28.5 mpg; transfer/Cleveland State).
Starters returning (4): Ayinde Avery, F, 6-7/Jr. (8.2 ppg, 1.1 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 1.1 bpg, 32.5 mpg); Willie Coleman, G, 6-1/Sr. (15.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 3.3 spg, 37.5 mpg); Thomas Cooper, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 1.2 spg, 32.5 mpg); Demarcus Gaines, F, 6-5/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 70.6 FT%, 31.2 mpg).
Other returnees: David Bruno, G, 6-2/Jr.; Brian Cashin, G, 6-1/Soph.; Jerry Fitzgerald, G, 5-11/Sr.; Devon Phillips, G, 6-2/Sr. (72.7 FT%, 14.0 mpg).
Top newcomers: Rashon Burno, G, 5-9/Fr.; Lamar Butler, C, 6-11/Jr. (JC); Kerry Hartfield, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Roman Peoples, F/C, 6-10/Sr. (transfer/Northeastern Illinois); Quentin Richardson, G, 6-6/Fr.; Bobby Simmons, F, 6-7/Fr.; Lance Williams, C, 6-9/Fr.
Last league title: 1992 (tie, Great Midwest).
Last NCAA appearance: 1992.
Site: Chicago. **Home courts:** Rosemont Horizon (17,500); United Center (21,000); Alumni Hall (5,300).

4. LOUISVILLE

Frontcourt: With JC transfer Dion Edward set to take over in the middle, Alex Sanders at last may be freed to play his natural power forward position. Merely moving there isn't enough, though; Sanders needs to play like that change means something. He has gotten less competitive with each game at Louisville. If he attacks, Sanders can be one of the league's best players. Edward sat out last season, but he is a force when he plays hard. His problem will be adjusting to coach Denny Crum's high-post style. Sanders may stay in that spot on offense for continuity's sake, but he won't have to defend centers as often.

Small forward Nate Johnson had a dismal 1997-98 season and more dismal offseason, but he is a fine one-on-one scorer. If he decides he wants to be a player, it can happen.

Backcourt: Point guard Cameron Murray wasn't quick enough, tough enough or smart enough in his first season after transferring from USC. He has the ball skills to break down defenders but wasn't well-conditioned and tended to make silly plays. Perhaps freshman Caleb Gervin can push Murray to play to his talent. One of them will have two excellent partners: Eric Johnson, a talented sixth man, and Marques Maybin, who has the shooting touch and athleticism to be all-league. He is likely to score in the high teens and take a run at all-conference honors.

Keys to success: Murray and Nate Johnson may be Louisville's most talented and least motivated players. If either or both were to begin the season in condition and with the proper frame of mind, the Cardinals would be in position to challenge for the conference title and a return to the NCAA Tournament.

Outlook: Nothing that has happened at Louisville of late has suggested the Cardinals are prepared to significantly improve. Their recruiting again was substandard. Nate Johnson's off-court problems did not indicate a change in attitude. The Cardinals weren't as bad as last year's 20 defeats would suggest, but they may struggle to avoid ending the year in the NIT.

Cardinals Data

Coach: Denny Crum (625-253, 27 years; 42-21 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in 1980, '86).
1997-98 record: 12-20. Conference USA American: 5-11/5th.

Starters lost (1): Damion Dantzler, F (8.4 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 45.8 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 27.1 mpg).

Others lost: Matt Akridge, G; Craig Farmer, G/F; Jerry Johnson, G (9.6 mpg; transfer).

Starters returning (4): Nate Johnson, F, 6-6/Jr. (12.3 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 1.2 spg, 27.9 mpg); Marques Maybin, G, 6-3/Soph. (10.0 ppg, 7.3 FT%, 38.1 3-pt%, 22.6 mpg); Cameron Murray, G, 6-0/Sr. (8.8 ppg, 39.6 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.5 spg, 29.2 mpg); Alex Sanders, C/F, 6-7/Sr. (10.5 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 3.0 apg, 1.0 spg, 30.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Travis Best, G, 6-1/Soph.; Eric Johnson, F/G, 6-3/Sr. (7.9 ppg, 45.9 FG%, 38.2 3-pt%, 18.6 mpg); Jeff McKinley, G, 6-5/Soph. (11.4 mpg); Tony Williams, F, 6-7/Jr. (9.1 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 37.0 3-pt%, 24.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Dion Edward, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Caleb Gervin, G, 6-1/Fr.; Tobiah Hopper, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Kevin Smiley, G, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Janerio Spurlock, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Hajj Turner, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS/knee).

Last league title: 1994 (Metro).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Louisville, Ky. **Home court:** Freedom Hall (18,865).

5. MARQUETTE

Frontcourt: It is getting to the point where it no longer is necessary to stick up for center Jarrod Lovette. You want to laugh at him, fine. He runs funny, can't jump, has a baby face, all that. But he produced double-figure points and led Marquette in rebounding. He'll never be great, but he would improve the majority of high-major teams.

Instead of nimble Richard Shaw to play alongside, Lovette will have 255-pound Greg Clausen to back him up and likely will operate with underrated freshman power forward Jon Harris. If there's a player on this roster who may surprise, it's Harris. There isn't much choice but to again depend on swingman Mike Bergen, who can shoot a little but tends toward being undependable.

Backcourt: Coach Mike Deane at last has the point guard he wants. He admired Tony Miller, who didn't fit his system. He tolerated Aaron Hutchins, who did. But freshman Cordell Henry is his guy. Henry is little (5-9), but he's quick, creative and can score—everything Deane wants in a playmaker. He played at a high level in high school (Whitney Young High in Chicago), which should help him make the transition. He also played club basketball with shooting guard Brian Wardle, who had a solid freshman season but needs to concentrate harder when he shoots and could stand to lose a few pounds. Shooter John Cliff has been a decent backup for two seasons and may be capable of more.

Keys to success: In a league that used to be overrun with point guards, Henry may be the closest thing there is to a pure, create-the-offense lead guard. If he is physically prepared for the demands of Division I, the Golden Eagles could avoid the bottom of this division and challenge for a seventh consecutive 20-win season.

Outlook: So many of Marquette's veterans have been players who've underachieved: Bergen, Cliff, forward John Polonowski. If the Golden Eagles can't achieve balance, it's hard to see how they'll escape mediocrity given their lack of a stud player and speed.

Golden Eagles Data

Coach: Mike Deane (86-40, 4 years; 276-142 overall, 13 years; 2-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-11. Conference USA American: 8-8/4th. Lost to Minnesota in NIT quarterfinals.

Starters lost (3): Aaron Hutchins, G (15.2 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 83.0 FT%, 41.0 3-pt%, 3.9 apg, 1.2 spg, 30.5 mpg); Richard Shaw, C/F (7.4 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 48.5 FG%, 1.1 bpg, 20.6 mpg); Marcus West, G (4.9 ppg, 3.6 apg, 1.4 spg, 27.1 mpg).

Others lost: Abel Joseph, F (3.5 rpg, 15.1 mpg); DeMarcus Minor, G (transfer/Barton County, Kan., CC).

Starters returning (2): Mike Bergen, F, 6-7/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 1.3 spg, 26.3 mpg); Jarrod Lovette, C, 6-10/Sr. (10.8 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 50.2 FG%, 27.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Greg Clausen, C, 6-11/Soph.; John Cliff, G, 6-2/Jr. (5.3 ppg, 14.8 mpg); John Polonowski, F, 6-8/Jr.; Brian Wardle, G, 6-5/Soph. (10.3 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 77.5 FT%, 27.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: David Diggs, G, 6-4/Fr.; Jon Harris, F, 6-7/Fr.; Cordell Henry, G, 5-9/Fr.; Oluoma Nnamaka, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1994 (Great Midwest).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Milwaukee. **Home court:** Bradley Center (19,100).

6. UNC CHARLOTTE

Frontcourt: It may help that UNCC has a new coach in Bobby Lutz, as the 49ers will have to do all sorts of new things to score. So much went through departed DeMarco Johnson, and there's no obvious replacement. Kelvin Price played strong up front, but he

isn't going to score big. Galen Young is a superior defender and great athlete, but he hasn't been efficient on offense, taking too many unwise shots and lacking a long-range touch. He could improve as a senior, but it's doubtful he will make up much of what Johnson took with him. Even the identity of Johnson's replacement at power forward is elusive. It could be Price, with redshirt freshman Ousseynou Kane taking the middle. Or it could be redshirt freshman Charles Hayward, the most touted recruit in school history who missed last season while overcoming leukemia. Or Lutz, whose only other head-coaching stop was at Pfeiffer (N.C.), could decide to play a smaller lineup.

Backcourt: Almost as painful as the loss of Johnson is the departure of point guard Sean Colson. The 49ers at least know who will take his spot, as Diego Guevara is a capable replacement. Guevara is a phenomenal shooter, perhaps even better under pressure. He is not extremely quick, though, and ideally would be a shooting guard if there were someone else to run the offense. Instead, he'll run the offense alongside defensive specialist Dalonte Hill and Marlon Thomas, whose switch from junior college to major college was especially rough.

Key to success: If UNCC is to avoid a major slide, there will have to be major improvement from somebody. Young? Price? Hill? They all have apparent limitations, although Young's are less in talent than execution. If he were to add precision to his toughness and acrobatics, the 49ers would have a chance at postseason play.

Outlook: It's a measure of the American Division's promise that a team this promising may finish last. This is not a group of bad players. There just don't seem to be enough great ones. Lutz, elevated from his assistant's spot when Melvin Watkins left for Texas A&M, prefers a more up-tempo game, but that'll be hard to enforce until he gets a speedier point guard. This is a transitional year.

49ers Data

Coach: Bobby Lutz (First year; 181-91 overall, 9 years).

1997-98 record: 20-11. Conference USA American: 13-3/2nd. Lost to North Carolina in NCAA East second round.

Starters lost (3): Sean Colson, G (15.6 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 88.2 FT%, 8.0 apg, 1.3 spg, 34.6 mpg); DeMarco Johnson, F (21.1 ppg, 9.0 rpg, 50.1 FG%, 77.9 FT%, 36.0 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 35.6 mpg); Verslie Shaw, F (5.0 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 1.1 spg, 21.9 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Carter, F (left team).

Starters returning (2): Kelvin Price, C, 6-8/Sr. (9.5 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 55.2 FG%, 1.5 spg, 31.4 mpg); Galen Young, G/F, 6-7/Sr. (8.5 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 71.4 FT%, 1.3 spg, 25.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Chris Diggins, G, 6-1/Sr.; Tremaine Gardiner, F, 6-5/Jr. (RS/knee); Diego Guevara, G, 6-1/Soph. (5.7 ppg, 82.4 FT%, 42.2 3-pt%, 20.0 mpg); Dalonte Hill, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 1.0 spg, 18.8 mpg); Kedric Smith, G, 5-11/Jr.; Marlon Thomas, G/F, 6-6/Sr. (11.3 mpg); Dee Tolliver, G, 6-4/Soph.

Top newcomers: Charles Hayward, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS/leukemia); Ousseynou Kane, C, 6-9/Fr. (RS/knee); Jonathan Neely, F, 6-10/Soph. (Prop 48); Jobey Thomas, G, 6-4/Fr.; Kenny Whitehead Jr., C, 6-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1997 (White Division).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Charlotte. **Home court:** Dale F. Halton Arena (9,105).

NATIONAL DIVISION

1. MEMPHIS

Frontcourt: A pain-free Jermaine Ousley should cause excruciating headaches for opposing coaches. Ousley barely practiced last season because of back problems, but has grown increasingly healthy and will be more dangerous in the middle as a shot blocker and rebounder. He is athletic and agile and can handle himself well when forced to challenge players two or three inches taller. It also will help to have help in reserve, with Georgetown transfer Shamel Jones and freshman Kelly Wise to support him. Forward Omar Sneed is the best low-post scorer in the nation, one of those Adrian Dantley/Corliss Williamson types who understands how to use his body down low; he is dangerous whenever he catches the ball on the block. The only question for Sneed this year is whom he'll score against. With freshman Paris London in the program, it might be wise occasionally to use Sneed as a post-up small forward and play London at the power spot. That would be one big, dangerous front line. London's potential contributions remain one of the questions for the Tigers. He is a gifted scorer who understands and accepts what makes him special. He runs and handles the ball well, but is too caught up trying to prove he can shoot 3-pointers. (He can't). Coach Tic Price's most pressing challenge is to convince London how he can best contribute to team success.



Sneed is the best low-post scorer in the nation because the senior understands how to use his body on the block.

Backcourt: The first month could be harrowing for the Tigers, who figure to operate without all-league point guard Detric Golden and super-gifted wing Jimmie Hunter until at least the semester break because of academics. Until they're ready, Memphis will be thin at guard and dependent upon transfer Keiron Shine, who shined at the JC level, and inconsistent sophomore Marcus Moody, who proved he could score with a 40-point game at Oklahoma in December, then spent the rest of the year disproving it. With Golden and Hunter, Memphis would have one of the most talented backcourts in the nation. Golden is a fine penetrator and shooter, and was one of Conference USA's top players in his first season out of junior college. What Golden could do better is distribute the ball, especially with so many scorers playing beside him. If Shine handles that part of the job well, it's possible Golden may struggle to get back a starting job. Hunter is simply the best player you've never seen: He shoots, he handles, he creates, he gets to the basket. Hunter's experience playing against top organized competition is limited, though, and he has yet to prove he can respond well to the pressure of championship-level competition.

Keys to success: Having Golden to play the point is key, but the addition of Hunter is a key to greatness. If Price can incorporate his ability into a team setting, get Hunter to apply his skills to victory and not just the greater good of Jimmie Hunter, Memphis becomes a Final Four dark horse.

Outlook: Perhaps no coach has as much work to do incorporating superior players into a cohesive group, but then, that's nothing new for Memphis. It is this program's tradition to harvest the city's extraordinary talent, then experience difficulty convincing those players to work toward team goals. Price's strength in that regard is a lack of patience; if one of his players becomes more interested in personal scoring totals, it's likely that player will end up trying to score from the bench. Once last season, he even sat down Sneed, the consummate warrior, after a halftime disagreement. There are too many variables for Memphis to become a wire-to-wire standout, and even if the Tigers get both Hunter and Golden in the lineup, there will be an adjustment period that drags down their ranking and possibly conference mark. By March, though, Memphis again could be the sort of NCAA Tournament threat its fans expect—no, demand.

Tigers Data

Coach: Tic Price (17-12, 1 year; 80-39 overall, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 17-12. Conference USA National: 12-4/1st. Lost to Fresno State in NIT second round.

Starters lost (2): Keldrick Bradford, G (9.8 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 51.9 FG%, 72.0FT%, 1.9 spg, 29.6 mpg); Harry Allen, G (6.5 ppg, 45.0 FG%, 41.8 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 18.7 mpg).

Others lost: Michael Brittan, C; Cody Hopson, F (9.2 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Detric Golden, G, 5-10/Sr. (14.2 ppg, 73.5 FT%, 43.9 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.5 spg, 35.8 mpg); Jermaine Ousley, F, 6-8/Sr. (9.0 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 1.1 bpg, 1.3 spg, 29.7 mpg); Omar Sneed, F, 6-6/Sr. (20.9 ppg, 9.2 rpg, 58.5 FG%, 1.7 spg, 36.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Shyrone Chatman, G, 6-3/Soph. (10.9 mpg); James Harris, C, 6-9/Soph. (48.7 FG%); Shamel Jones, F/C, 6-9/Soph.; Demond Lyles, G, 5-10/Sr.; Marcus Moody, G, 6-5/Soph. (7.7 ppg, 1.4 spg, 23.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Dinno Daniels, G, 6-0/Fr.; Jimmie Hunter, G, 6-4/Soph. (ineligible for at least the first semester); Paris London, F, 6-8/Fr.; Aaron Mulvagh, G, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Keiron Shine, G, 5-10/Jr. (JC); Kelly Wise, F, 6-9/Fr.

Last league title: 1998 (National Division).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Memphis, Tenn. **Home court:** The Pyramid (20,142).

2. UAB

Frontcourt: There is no one player on the front line to disarm the opposition, but it has been a while since the Blazers have been so deep. There are six players 6-7 or taller, and there are more basketball players than weightlifters, for a change. If UAB is to progress, though, it'll need to depend more on Fred Williams, who played part-time minutes and produced full-time results in his first season. Myron Ransom wasn't quite ready as a freshman, but the small forward could break out because of his athletic ability and tenacity. The big players, notably Antonio Jackson and DeWayne Brown, aren't particularly notable, but generally do what's asked of them. Willie Mitchell was a disappointment, which is becoming redundant, but the former Michigan Wolverine still might be capable of contributing if he decides that matters.

Backcourt: The loss of Cedric Dixon left coach Murry Bartow in need of a scorer, and his answer was to sign JC guard Eric Holmes. Damon Cobb is a terrific shooter, but he hasn't been able to keep up the defensive pace to play more than 20-some minutes a game. If Holmes is decent or better, those two and LeAndrew Bass should form an impressive backcourt. Bass is a big point guard who nearly led the Blazers in assists despite playing less than half the time. His shooting is suspect, but he could get points posting up smaller opponents.

Key to success: Defense hasn't been a problem for the Blazers. When they allowed opponents to shoot 40 percent last season, it almost was considered a down year. To be assured of getting back to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in five years, UAB has to find a consistent offensive scheme and a scoring threat to make it work. Best bet? Holmes. He may be the only bet, as the ceiling on the others appears fairly clear.

Outlook: Although the National Division isn't as deep as its counterpart, the competition at the top is stronger, and UAB will have to scramble to stay ahead of Southern Miss and South Florida. Experience gives the Blazers an edge on USF. They have better talent than USM. That should spell N-C-A-A.

Blazers Data

Coach: Murry Bartow (39-26, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 21-12. Conference USA National: 10-6/2nd. Lost to Minnesota in NIT second round.

Starters lost (1): Cedric Dixon, G (13.3 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 74.3 FT%, 38.8 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 3.2 apg, 29.7 mpg).

Others lost: Predrag Savovic, G (transfer/Hawaii).

Starters returning (4): Damon Cobb, G, 6-4/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 78.0 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 23.4 mpg); Antonio Jackson, F, 6-8/Sr. (7.5 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 18.9 mpg); Torrey Ward, G, 6-3/Jr. (7.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 54.2 FG%, 72.6 FT%, 20.0 mpg); Fred Williams, F, 6-8/Sr. (11.8 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 50.2 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 25.3 mpg).

Other returnees: LeAndrew Bass, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 17.1 mpg); DeWayne Brown, F, 6-7/Sr. (4.6 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 14.6 mpg); Predrag Materic, G, 6-6/Jr. (16.5 mpg); Willie Mitchell, F, 6-8/Sr. (9.5 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 21.2 mpg); Felix Okam, C, 6-11/Sr.; Myron Ransom, F, 6-5/Soph. (4.5 ppg, 2.2 rpg, 11.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Igor Nikolic, C, 7-1/Soph. (RS/knee); Eric Holmes, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1990 (Sun Belt).

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Birmingham, Ala. **Home court:** Bartow Arena (8,500).

3. SOUTH FLORIDA

Frontcourt: Exactly how excited one should be about the front line depends upon how freshman B.B. Waldon is classified. USF lists him as a forward, although it seems a thin backcourt might push him to more time at shooting guard. But if he's a forward, then this front line jumps from good to very good. It's only a shot blocker away from excellence, but the lone hope there is 190-pound redshirt freshman Raheim Brown, who may struggle to crack the lineup. Waldon, an elite recruit, is the scoring force the Bulls lacked last season, and he could make them an instant tournament contender. He's not the only top freshman wing. Altron Jackson also will help, though he's not quite as talented. Scott Johnson, Artha Reeves and Chonsey Asbury will be improved as defenses are forced to deal with Waldon. One of coach Seth Greenberg's more pleasant problems is figuring out what to do with small forward Cedric Smith, who started every game as a freshman but now faces a challenge for playing time.

Backcourt: Greenberg still has Anddrikk Frazier to play point if necessary, but Greenberg understands Haven Jackson has to be in charge if USF is to be seriously improved. Jackson is strong and a capable shooter, but he wrestled with the idea of being in charge and wasn't careful enough with the ball. Shooting guard Shaddrick Jenkins is competitive and physical, but he drew a lot of defensive attention and didn't shoot well enough in his first season after transferring from a JC. Waldon and Jackson could create more opportunities for Jenkins and free him to be more selective.

Key to success: The one area where Greenberg's recruiting hasn't been a knockout is point guard. Jackson is a fine player. But he and his coaches will determine if he becomes a fine point guard—and if he becomes one in time to help the 1998-99 team.

Outlook: The nice thing about USF's current state is the Bulls already understand how to play defense. They won 17 last year while shooting under 40 percent, which is some trick. Waldon only can improve the offense and make Johnson and Asbury greater threats to score. If both can add three points to their averages, USF will be a team talked about for an NCAA at-large berth.

Bulls Data

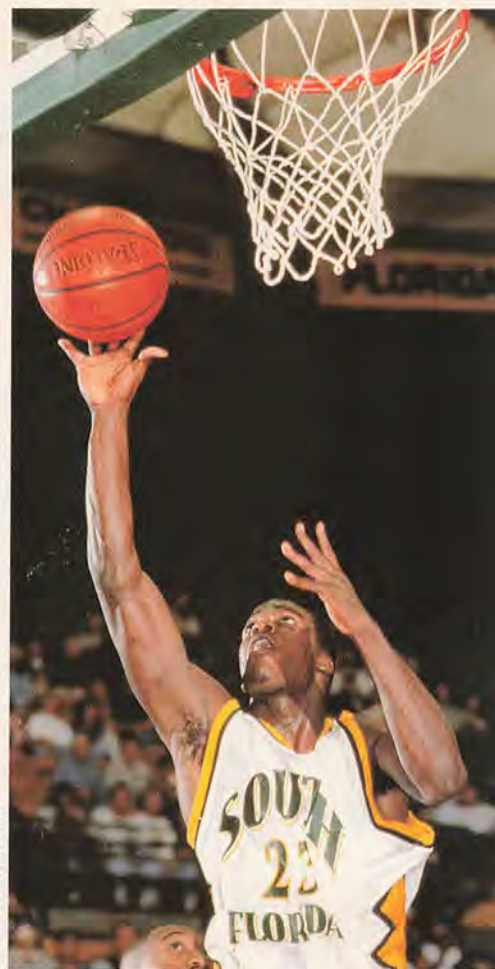
Coach: Seth Greenberg (25-32, 2 years; 130-102 overall, 8 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-13. Conference USA National: 7-9/4th.

Starters lost (1): Brian Lamb, G (7.7 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 76.8 FT%, 1.9 spg, 27.9 mpg).

Others lost: Alberto Buzzavo, F (transfer/Dowling, N.Y.); Luka Jovanovic, F; Dan Luczywko, F (4.7 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 75.5 FT%, 16.1 mpg; transfer/Illinois State); Federico Peruzzo, C (left school).

Starters returning (4): Chonsey Asbury, F, 6-6/Soph.



Jenkins is competitive and physical, but he shot poorly after arriving from junior college.

(9.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 24.4 mpg); Shaddrick Jenkins, G, 6-3/Sr. (10.6 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 1.9 spg, 29.2 mpg); Scott Johnson, C, 6-10/Jr. (12.0 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 81.0 FT%, 28.5 mpg); Cedric Smith, F, 6-4/Soph. (9.8 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 1.8 spg, 25.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Anddrikk Frazier, G, 5-10/Sr. (4.0 ppg, 1.2 spg, 18.0 mpg); Haven Jackson, G, 6-2/Soph. (4.9 ppg, 17.0 mpg); Artha Reeves, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.0 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 17.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Raheim Brown, F, 6-9/Fr. (RS); William Copeland, G, 5-10/Fr.; Derek Hollman, C, 6-9/Fr.; Altron Jackson, F, 6-6/Fr.; B.B. Waldon, F/G, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1992.

Site: Tampa. **Home court:** Sun Dome (10,044).

4. SOUTHERN MISS

Frontcourt: It sometimes can be hard to evaluate the Golden Eagles because they have a tendency to turn players no one has heard of into players no one wants to play again. They'll need a few such players this year, with so little returning to the front line. Center Vandarel Jones is one of the most powerful players in the league, but he's not especially polished, which could make him a candidate to move to power forward if JC transfer Carlos Booker is ready. He led the nation in blocks as a JC freshman and could put teeth into a defense that previously was more effective on the perimeter. Former JC transfer Pedro Phillips is a garbage-type small forward

who should improve now that he has spent a year in Division I. It's not a front line that figures to score a lot, which is this team's principal weakness.

Backcourt: Indiana refugee Neil Reed should be in jump-shooter's heaven. Who's going to tell him not to fire? There's no one on the roster with offensive skills remotely close to his. If Reed doesn't launch 15 to 18 attempts a game, either something is wrong with the Eagles' offensive approach or defenses are running three guys at him. Which would be OK, because Reed, whose father is a USM assistant, is an unselfish player who'll recognize opportunities to help his teammates. He won't need to play the point, as USM is solid there with Mel Cauthen and Arthur Stapleton. Cauthen was impressive in February and nearly drove the team to an NCAA bid.

Key to success: The Golden Eagles rarely looked like much on offense, but they got the ball in the basket with Kelly McCarty and Jimmie Floyd. Who's going to do that now, aside from Reed? It's possible one guy could do it more or less alone, but that's rarely the case in modern basketball. If Jones could be made into a more confident weapon, USM might not fall this far.

Outlook: The absence of multiple scoring threats will be difficult for even coach James Green's defensive mind to overcome. There's no reason the Golden Eagles can't be good, but no reason to believe they'll be better.

Golden Eagles Data

Coach: James Green (34-26, 2 years).
1997-98 record: 22-11. Conference USA National: 9-7/3rd. Lost to Auburn in NIT first round.
Starters lost (3): Rod Agee, G/F (5.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 47.8 FG%, 73.7 FT%, 48.0 3-pt%, 3.1 apg, 26.6 mpg); Jimmie Floyd, G (13.9 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 87.4 FT%, 39.8 3-pt%, 30.8 mpg); Kelly McCarty, F (14.6 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 49.5 FG%, 72.9 FT%, 1.4 bpg, 33.6 mpg).
Others lost: Neal Broome, G/F (transfer/JC); Eric Lee, C (82.4 FT%) (transfer); Anthony Richards, F/C (9.9 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 53.1 FG%, 23.7 mpg; quit team).
Starters returning (2): Mel Cauthen, G, 6-0/Soph. (6.5 ppg, 48.7 FG%, 77.8 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 3.8 apg, 26.2 mpg); Pedro Phillips, F, 6-5/Sr. (7.6 ppg, 70.9 FT%, 23.3 mpg).
Other returnees: Vandarel Jones, C, 6-9/Jr. (8.3 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 71.3 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 20.1 mpg); Robert Lewis, G, 6-3/Sr.; Arthur Stapleton, G, 6-3/Sr. (4.8 ppg, 18.7 mpg); Kevin Winn, G, 6-3/Sr. (52.9 FG%).
Top newcomers: Carlos Booker, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Tobias Brinkley, G, 6-4/Fr.; Earl Flowers, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); George Giuria, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Neil Reed, G, 6-2/Sr. (transfer/Indiana); Mark Schwab, C, 6-10/Fr.; Kilavorus Thompson, F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48).
Last league title: 1991 (Metro).
Last NCAA appearance: 1991.
Site: Hattiesburg, Miss. **Home court:** Reed Green Coliseum (8,095).

5. HOUSTON

Frontcourt: With Galen Robinson's dead weight dislodged, Houston might be wise to make greater use of Kenny Younger, whose first-year numbers were intriguing. Of course, too much attention to numbers got Houston wedded to Robinson in the first place, so Younger will need to be more active and competitive. He won't get a lot of help. The front

line is chief among Houston's weaknesses, and it could result in freshman guard Moses Malone Jr. taking a place at small forward. There doesn't seem to be much sense in employing unproductive juniors William Stringfellow and Early Smith more than one at a time. Willie Moore and Charles Fordjour need to play more consistently.

Backcourt: The Cougars suffered when point guard Roy Spears was injured in last season's second game, and they ended up averaging 22 turnovers a game. If Spears stays healthy, Houston can cut that number to something considerably less embarrassing and perhaps even run an offense. Spears had 12 assists in two games; only seven others who played the entire year topped that and he was the only one to finish with a positive assist-turnover ratio. He'll compete with JC transfer Gee "son of George" Gervin, who is talented but more volatile than Spears. Swingman Chad Hendrick is an intriguing athlete with good size and a good-looking shot; new coach Clyde Drexler should understand as well as anyone what he needs to become a complete player.

Keys to success: Double-digit victories would equate to success, but even that may be difficult if Drexler does not quickly adapt to making decisions as a coach. He's used to thinking quickly—but he always could depend on his own arms and legs to carry through those thoughts.

Outlook: There are enough good athletes on the roster for the Cougars to finish above Tulane—if they progress. And if bloodlines mean anything, the sons of a Hall of Famer (George Gervin) and a future Hall of Famer (Moses Malone) are on the roster. The home-court advantage at Hofheinz Pavilion may be more imposing with more fans visiting the arena because of Drexler, which means doubling last season's two-win conference total is a reasonable goal. But the Phi Slama Jama era is a distant, fuzzy memory.

Cougars Data

Coach: Clyde Drexler (First year).
1997-98 record: 9-20. Conference USA National: 2-14/T5th.
Starters lost (2): Galen Robinson, F (13.8 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 52.8 FG%, 72.1 FT%, 50.0 3-pt%, 1.3 bpg, 29.9 mpg); Shamahn McBride, G (11.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 75.6 FT%, 1.7 spg, 32.2 mpg).
Others lost: Trey Austin, F (12.0 mpg; transfer).
Starters returning (3): Treva Crosby, G, 6-1/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 80.4 FT%, 24.2 mpg); Chad Hendrick, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (8.1 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 23.4 mpg); Kenny Younger, F, 6-9/Jr. (10.0 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 29.5 mpg).
Other returnees: Charles Fordjour, F, 6-6/Soph. (9.8 mpg); Willie Moore, F, 6-5/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 74.6 FT%, 19.3 mpg); Early Smith, F, 6-8/Jr. (54.3 FG%, 11.7 mpg); Roy Spears, G, 6-2/Jr. (RS/knee); William Stringfellow, F, 6-8/Jr. (50.0 FG%, 14.1 mpg).
Top newcomers: Jake Ballis, F, 6-8/Fr.; Brooks Bassler, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (gave up track); Torrence Botts, G, 6-1/Fr.; Gee Gervin, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Moses Malone Jr., G, 6-5/Fr.; Tega Moceanu, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Justin Wiggins, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Tulsa).
Last league title: 1992 (tie, Southwest).
Last NCAA appearance: 1992.
Site: Houston. **Home court:** Hofheinz Pavilion (8,479).

6. TULANE

Frontcourt: Tulane supporters like to point out that the Green Wave started three freshmen for much of the conference season, but that doesn't mean much if the freshmen don't stick around. Power forward Chris Owens transferred to Texas after a spotty first year. There still is Ledaryl Billingsley to play power forward, and he is capable of better production than his freshman year suggests. But low-skilled Morris Jordan becomes the center with almost no one to back him up, and role player Ted Kritza will be called upon for major contributions after shooting 42 percent last season. The recruiting class offers almost no help.

Backcourt: Swingman Byron Mouton did most of what was expected of him as a freshman, although he became too reliant on a 3-point touch that was iffy. He seemed content to chuck outside shots because creating better opportunities meant more work, and why bother on such a bad team? If he's to become one of C-USA's better players, he needs to make better than 30 percent of his 3-pointers or take far fewer than half his shots from that range. Point guard remains a nightmare. Incumbent P.J. Franklin made just a third of his shots and amassed more turnovers than assists. He's also a starting receiver on the football team. There may be competition from JC product Marlo Miles, but weakness at that position dooms Tulane to another year of fighting (or not) to avoid the cellar.

Keys to success: Billingsley and Mouton must decide defeat is not acceptable and force their teammates to lift their quality of play. Is that asking too much? Probably.

Outlook: This program has rapidly deteriorated over the past three seasons, and the idea of moving into 20,000-seat New Orleans Sports Arena coming off another 20-loss season is not appealing. There may be only 20-some fans left by then.

Green Wave Data

Coach: Perry Clark (153-119, 9 years; 3-3 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 7-22. Conference USA National: 2-14/T5th.
Starters lost (2): Chris Owens, F (6.1 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 1.1 bpg, 19.7 mpg; transfer/Texas); Lawrence Nelson, C (5.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 1.8 bpg, 19.0 mpg).
Others lost: Jon Citrin, G; Demetric Shaw, G (transfer); Billy Wells, G (4.4 ppg, 75.0 FT%, 1.4 spg, 19.2 mpg; transfer/Delaware).
Starters returning (3): P.J. Franklin, G, 5-10/Jr. (5.6 ppg, 71.4 FT%, 1.2 spg, 23.6 mpg); Morris Jordan, F/C, 6-10/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 49.0 FG%, 73.5 FT%, 19.1 mpg); Byron Mouton, F/G, 6-6/Soph. (15.3 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 75.9 FT%, 1.7 spg, 31.3 mpg).
Other returnees: Ledaryl Billingsley, F, 6-7/Soph. (5.0 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 15.2 mpg); Sterling Davis, F, 6-7/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 35.0 3-pt%, 14.6 mpg); Keith Harris, F, 6-7/Sr. (3.3 rpg, 13.6 mpg); Ted Kritza, F, 6-7/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 37.5 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 18.1 mpg).
Top newcomers: Linton Johnson, F, 6-8/Fr.; Waitari Marsh, G, 6-2/Fr.; Wade Mason, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Marlo Miles, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC).
Last league title: 1997 (Red Division).
Last NCAA appearance: 1995.
Site: New Orleans. **Home court:** Fogelman Arena (3,600).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: Missouri. Of the 12 players on Norm Stewart's 32nd MU roster, seven are freshmen or sophomores, but that's not all bad. After several stagnant years, the Tigers should be revitalized by an influx of good, young talent.

Descending: Texas Tech. In 1996, Tech was 30-2 and whipped North Carolina in the NCAA Tournament. Those Red Raiders had four NBA-bound players—Cory Carr, Darvin Ham, Tony Battie and Jason Sasser. Tech still is competitive, but the talent level clearly has fallen off. NCAA sanctions brought cuts of seven scholarships over three years.

Biggest sneakers to fill: Kansas forward Raef LaFrentz's. He was a first-team All-American and an NBA lottery pick. Seven-footer Eric Chenoweth will be compared often to LaFrentz; can he justify those comparisons?

Most underrated player: Missouri guard Brian Grawer. The son of former St. Louis University coach Rich Grawer took over at the point midway through his freshman season and quickly solidified the team, averaging more than two assists for every turnover in league play. He also led the Tigers in 3-point percentage, free-throw percentage and steals.

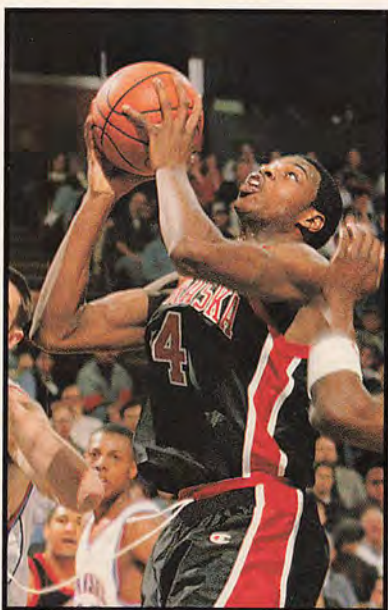
Most overrated player: Nebraska forward Venson Hamilton. He might be the league's best rebounder and a good shot blocker, but at 6-10, he is much too talented to score barely in double figures. Worse, he gives up position inside too easily. He blocks shots, but gives up far too many.

Coach on the hot seat: Baylor's Harry Miller. The Bears never quite got enough out of four seasons with an NBA first-round pick (center Brian Skinner). Miller inherited a mess from former coach Darrel Johnson in 1994, but Baylor is feeling heat to get its high-profile athletic programs turned around.

Best bets: Missouri will lose a road game it should have won and Norm Stewart will blame the creation of the Big 12. ... Look for first-year coach Melvin Watkins and assistant Tom Billeter to hit the JC ranks hard in search of quick help at Texas A&M. ... First-year Texas coach Rick Barnes will make sweeping changes in the Longhorns, who were accustomed to shooting first and playing defense later under Tom Penders. On the flip side, Larry Eustachy will rev up the offense at Iowa State, where Tim Floyd coached the Cyclones with a half-court mindset.

Odds and ends: Kansas has two streaks that may be hard to continue. One is a 60-game winning streak at Allen Fieldhouse, the other 15 consecutive victories at Kansas State. ... Texas A&M has a new coach (Melvin Watkins) and a new home. The Aggies move into 12,500-seat Reed Arena this year. ... Over the past three seasons, Kansas is a combined 98-11, tying for the second-most wins in a three-year period. Kentucky won 102 games from 1947-49. ... K-State owns the NCAA record for consecutive home seasons with a winning record at 52. ... Nebraska has had 10 20-win seasons in its history, and Danny Nee has coached the Huskers to six of those. ... Oklahoma has averaged 20.3 wins and made the NCAA Tournament in each of Kelvin Sampson's four years as coach.

—KURT CAYWOOD AND JONATHAN FEIGEN



Hamilton can rebound and block shots, but he is too talented not to score more.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. Missouri (G Keyon Dooling). Highlighted by a top-50 recruit in Dooling, the Tigers got a desperately needed transfusion of talent.
2. Kansas (G Jeff Boschee).
3. Colorado (G Jose Winston).
4. Oklahoma (C Victor Avila).
5. Nebraska (F Louis Truscott).
6. Iowa State (G Michael Nurse).
7. Oklahoma State (C Roy Candley).
8. Kansas State (G Cortez Groves).
9. Texas Tech (G Jevon Banks).
10. Texas (G Vohn Hunter).
11. Baylor (G Robert Thornton).
12. Texas A&M (C Joe White).

BY KURT CAYWOOD
Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal
AND JONATHAN FEIGEN
Houston Chronicle

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Oklahoma St. | 7. Nebraska |
| 2. Kansas | 8. Kansas St. |
| 3. Oklahoma | 9. Colorado |
| 4. Texas | 10. Texas Tech |
| 5. Missouri | 11. Texas A&M |
| 6. Iowa State | 12. Baylor |

ALL-BIG 12

FIRST TEAM

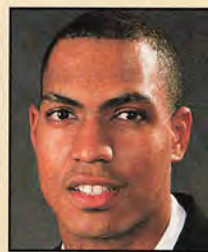
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/C	MANNY DIES, Kansas State	6-9/230	Jr.
F	MARCUS FIZER, Iowa State	6-8/240	Soph.
F	RYAN HUMPHREY, Oklahoma	6-8/225	Soph.
G	ADRIAN PETERSON, Oklahoma State	6-4/197	Sr.
G	RYAN ROBERTSON, Kansas	6-5/182	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/G	KRIS CLACK, Texas	6-5/225	Sr.
F	EDUARDO NAJERA, Oklahoma	6-8/235	Jr.
F	ALBERT WHITE, Missouri	6-5/238	Jr.
G/F	KENNY GREGORY, Kansas	6-5/215	Soph.
G	KENNY PRICE, Colorado	6-4/190	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

MARCUS FIZER, F, Iowa State



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

VICTOR AVILA, C, Oklahoma

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Kenny Price, Colorado.

Best rebounder: Venson Hamilton, Nebraska.

Best playmaker: Rayford Young, Texas Tech.

Best defender: T.J. Pugh, Kansas.

Best leaper: Lester Earl, Kansas.

Most versatile: Kris Clack, Texas.

Most flamboyant: Lester Earl, Kansas.

Best NBA prospect: Chris Mihm, Texas.



1. OKLAHOMA STATE

Frontcourt: Desmond Mason is one of the best athletes in the Big 12 and could blossom into one of its best players. He showed that sort of ability in the NCAA Tournament against George Washington and Duke. But Mason must handle so much of the dirty work inside and against taller players that it is difficult for coach Eddie Sutton to feature him more. Mason might have to carry an even bigger load with center Brett Robisch gone. Sutton has brought in JC big man John Gilmore and two young projects, Fredrik Jonzen and 7-2, 390-pound Roy Candley, to fill the inside void. Both are projects, although Jonzen, a Swedish national team player who went to high school in Shawnee Mission, Kan., could help this season. Sutton will not have to rush either onto the court. Scott Robisch, Alex Webber and Brian Montonati will do much of that work for now. Webber and Montonati had moments in reserve roles last season, and Robisch, though not as physical as his brother, could begin to develop as Brett did now that he's over the injuries (a stress fracture in his thigh and tendinitis in his hand) of his first two seasons.

Backcourt: Adrian Peterson, the Cowboys' leading scorer the past two seasons, had been one of the nation's underappreciated stars. That ended in the 1998 postseason, when it was impossible not to understand his role as a dependable scorer, defender and rebounder. Doug Gottlieb is a solid playmaker, but he can be neutralized by zones. In his first season after his transfer from Notre Dame, Gottlieb averaged 6.9 assists but must improve his shooting to be an all-around player. Joe Adkins also can play the point, but he has become an effective outside shooter who could develop much the same as Peterson did last year. Arkansas transfer Glendon Alexander will be eligible in December. Alexander could give Sutton a zone-buster off the bench and insurance for the times the offense runs dry.

Key to success: Brett Robisch was a surprise as the only true big man on the court for OSU last season. The Cowboys will have to replace him with a committee of inside players. And though none are likely to assume his load alone, Scott Robisch, Webber and Montonati already have shown enough to get the job done. Unlike last season, when Sutton *had* to get scoring from Brett Robisch, there seems to be enough offense elsewhere for his big men to worry only about rebounding and defense.

Outlook: Oklahoma State has finished first or second in its league in six of the past seven seasons, making the Cowboys the safest pick in the South Division. Beyond safe, they return almost all of the key players from last season's surprise success story. Nine of them have NCAA Tournament experience, and the backcourt could be the best in the league.

COWBOYS DATA

Coach: Eddie Sutton (179-77, 8 years; 609-241 overall, 28 years; 28-19 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 22-7. Big 12: 11-5/T2nd. Lost to Duke in NCAA South second round.

Starters lost (1): Brett Robisch, F/C (15.4 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 78.2 FT%, 33.4 mpg).

Others lost: Chad Alexander, G (5.4 ppg, 72.1 FT%, 16.7 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Joe Adkins, G, 6-2/Jr. (12.6 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 78.7 FT%, 3.4 apg, 1.9 spg, 29.4 mpg); Doug Gottlieb, G, 6-1/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 6.9 apg, 1.4 spg, 31.2 mpg); Desmond Mason, F, 6-6/Jr. (14.6 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 1.8 spg, 32.7 mpg); Adrian Peterson, G, 6-4/Sr. (17.7 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 46.2 FG%, 79.9 FT%, 1.2 spg, 35.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Michael Johnson, F, 6-7/Soph.; Brian Montonati, F, 6-9/Jr.; Scott Robisch, F/C, 6-10/Soph.; Alex Webber, F, 6-10/Jr.

Top newcomers: Glendon Alexander, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (transfer/Arkansas; eligible second semester); Roy Candley, C, 7-2/Jr. (JC); John Gilmore, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Fredrik Jonzen, F, 6-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1991 (tie, Big Eight).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Stillwater, Okla. **Home court:** Gallagher-Iba Arena (6,381).



Peterson had been one of the nation's underappreciated stars, but that ended when he showed his vast skills in the 1998 postseason.

2. KANSAS

Frontcourt: All Kansas has to do here is replace Raef LaFrentz and Paul Pierce, the third and 10th picks, respectively, in the NBA draft. They took with them 40.2 points per game, 18.1 rebounds and consensus All-American acclaim. T.J. Pugh, a defensive stalwart who started 27 games last year, returns for his senior year. But while Pugh likely will be among the starting five again, he averaged fewer than six points a game last season and probably won't pick up too big a chunk of those 40.2 points. Power forward Lester Earl was a role player in his first season after transferring from LSU. This year, he'll be asked to display more of the offensive flash that made him one of the country's most recruited players three years ago. Eric Chenoweth smashed the KU freshman record for blocks with 62. Nick Bradford sparked the Jayhawks on occasion as Pierce's backup, but needs to become more steady to make a difference. Among the newcomers, wing forward Ashante Johnson has a chance to make the biggest impact. A transfer from a JC who caddied for Keith Van Horn two years ago at Utah, Johnson became a target for Kansas after Pierce announced he would not return for his senior season.

Backcourt: Ryan Robertson, a two-time honorable mention All-Big 12 pick, took over as the starting point guard last year and averaged 6.4 assists. But as well as he did at the point—where he's 45-4 as a starter the past two seasons—Robertson could well move to shooting guard if incoming freshman Jeff Boschee, described by coach Roy Williams as "Bobby Hurley with a jump shot," catches on quickly. Kenny Gregory, a leaper who averaged seven points last season, also figures prominently. If he's not at shooting guard, where he presents a completely different package than departed bomber Billy Thomas, look for Gregory at small forward. Then there are the youngsters. The day after Kansas lost to Rhode Island in the NCAA Tournament, Williams offered a scholarship to John Crider, a all-state pick from the small northeast Kansas town of Horton. Soon thereafter, the Jayhawks corralled Marlon London, a shooting guard from St. Joseph's High in Chicago. KU's fifth acquisition was Luke Axtell, who will sit out the '98-99 season after transferring from Texas.

Keys to success: Simply put, the Jayhawks have to replace 57 percent of their scoring and find someone to take the big shot, a role that, over the past couple of seasons, has been filled by the likes of LaFrentz, Pierce and Jacque Vaughn. Robertson is the leading candidate, but he's not the only possibility. The Jayhawks might not be as star-studded as in recent years, but there still are six former McDonald's All-Americans on the roster.

Outlook: Two years ago, Kansas was expected to win the national championship. Last year, it was one of the four teams with the best chance at it. With the passing of four NBA first-round picks in that span, the Jayhawks aren't even favored to win the conference this season. But stranger things have happened. And, as Robertson cautions, the road to the Big 12 championship still runs through Lawrence.

Jayhawks Data

Coach: Roy Williams (282-62, 10 years; 21-9 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 35-4. Big 12: 15-1/1st. Lost to Rhode Island in NCAA Midwest second round.

Starters lost (3): Raef LaFrentz, F (19.8 ppg, 11.4 rpg, 54.8 FG%, 73.8 FT%, 1.5 bpg, 30.2 mpg); Paul Pierce, F (20.4 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 51.3 FG%, 73.8 FT%, 1.1 spg, 1.1 bpg, 30.4 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Billy Thomas, G (13.6 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 40.1 3-pt%, 2.8 apg, 1.7 spg, 26.7 mpg).

Others lost: C.B. McGrath, G.

Starters returning (2): T.J. Pugh, F/C, 6-8/Sr. (5.7 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 24.2 mpg); Ryan Robertson, G, 6-5/Sr. (8.3 ppg, 45.4 FG%, 73.3 FT%, 43.1 3-pt%, 6.4 apg, 1.4 spg, 31.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Nick Bradford, F/G, 6-6/Jr. (4.2 ppg, 45.3 FG%, 14.1 mpg); Eric Chenoweth, C, 7-0/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 45.4 FG%, 1.6 bpg, 17.0 mpg); Lester Earl, F, 6-8/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 49.7 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 20.7 mpg); Kenny Gregory, G/F, 6-5/215, Soph. (7.1 ppg, 50.4 FG%, 15.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jeff Boschee, G, 6-1/Fr.; Jeff Carey, C, 6-11/Fr. (RS); John Crider, G, 6-3/Fr.; Ashante Johnson, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Marlon London, G, 6-3/Fr.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1989.

Site: Lawrence, Kan. **Home court:** Allen Fieldhouse (16,300).



A role player last season, Earl will be asked to display more of the offensive flash that made him a big-time recruit in 1995-96.

ED NESSEN / TSN

3. OKLAHOMA

Frontcourt: Eduardo Najera has looked like a coming force in the Big 12 since he was a freshman. Injuries held him back last season, including a broken foot, but he should be at full strength this season. Despite his physical woes, he still was the Sooners' third-leading scorer and rebounder. Ryan Humphrey, like Najera the year before, showed all sorts of promise as a freshman, starting 24 games and earning a spot on the Big 12 All-Freshman team. He led the team in rebounds despite battling iron-deficiency anemia most of the year. Renzi Stone, usually a backup center last season, could inherit Evan "Hootie" Wiley's spot in the middle. What he lacks in scoring touch, Stone can make up for with strength. But touted JC transfer Victor Avila seems similar to Wiley and is likely to win the center position quickly. Avila earned second-team All-American acclaim at Scottsdale (Ariz.) CC last season. Coming off back surgery, swingman Eric Martin could be a surprise off the bench. Like Najera, Martin can score inside or out. Oleg Reztsov, a 7-footer from Ukraine, sat out last season as a redshirt and most of his sophomore junior college season with a broken foot. He is an interesting prospect.

Backcourt: Since Kelvin Sampson has been at Oklahoma, he always has had a scorer to build around and count on, from Ryan Minor to Nate Erdmann to Corey Brewer last season. He does not seem to have Brewer's successor in place, but Tim Heskett, a point guard and a solid shooter, returns after playing only two games last season because of a back injury. Michael Johnson, who took over at the point, also returns after starting 29 of 33 games last season. Johnson led the Sooners in assists and steals, and his 18 assists against North Texas were the most by a Division I player last season. Johnson and Heskett can hit the open jumper, but neither can be expected to replace Brewer. Instead, Sampson could use their playmaking abilities to feature his proven frontcourt scorers. JC transfer Kelley Newton is unlikely to be the all-around scorer Minor, Erdmann and Brewer were, but he could be a good enough shooter, especially with experienced point guards around him, to take the defensive pressure off Humphrey and Najera inside. Newton shot 44.8 percent from 3-point range last season.

Keys to success: Neither Humphrey nor Najera has been the first option in the offense, but with Brewer gone, one or both will have to carry more of the scoring load. Both seem capable, but a dependable outside threat, if not quite the first-option scorer, must be found.

Outlook: The offensive emphasis likely will move inside. But that should fit well with a team that emphasizes defense, rebounding and a precise offense. If the Sooners remain healthy for a change, they should be deeper and have many more scorers than in recent years, and no longer having to rely on one key shooter could be key come March. Another NCAA Tournament is probable.

Sooners Data

Coach: Kelvin Sampson (81-44, 4 years; 257-192 overall, 15 years; 0-5 NCAA Tournament record.)

1997-98 record: 22-11. Big 12: 11-5/T2nd. Lost to Indiana in NCAA East first round.

Starters lost (2): Corey Brewer, G (20.8 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 79.8 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 1.6 spg, 35.4 mpg); Evan Wiley, C (10.7 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 59.3 FG%, 23.8 mpg).

Others lost: Robert Allison, G (6.3 ppg, 70.2 FT%, 35.2 3-pt%, 21.1 mpg); Reggie Bass, G; Bobby Joe Evans, F/C.

Starters returning (3): Ryan Humphrey, F, 6-8/Soph. (9.2 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 1.8 bpg, 23.3 mpg); Michael Johnson, G, 6-0/Sr. (7.1 ppg, 75.3 FT%, 42.0 3-pt%, 4.3 apg, 1.6 spg, 31.7 mpg); Eduardo Najera, F, 6-8/Jr. (10.5 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 1.2 spg, 28.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Tim Heskett, G, 6-1/Soph. (RS/back); Eric Martin, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (6.5 ppg, 87.8 FT%, 19.6 mpg); Oleg Reztsov, C, 7-2/Jr. (RS/development); Alex Spaulding, G, 6-3/Soph.; Renzi Stone, F, 6-10/Jr. (4.8 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 50.9 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 22.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Victor Avila, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Nolan Johnson, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Kelley Newton, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); J.R. Raymond, G, 6-2/Fr.

Last league title: 1989 (Big Eight).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1994.

Site: Norman, Okla. **Home court:** Lloyd Noble Center (11,100).



Humphrey showed lots of promise as a freshman, leading the team in rebounds despite battling iron-deficiency anemia most of the year.



Clack hasn't developed the shooting touch that would make him a star, but he remains one of the Big 12's most versatile players.

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

4. TEXAS

Frontcourt: Chris Mihm no longer will post up inside while Texas guards take 30-footers off the dribble. If Mihm, one of the best freshmen in school history, continues to develop, new coach Rick Barnes will not let the rest of the Longhorns ignore him. Nnadubem Muoneke (formerly known as Gabe) also finally could develop some of the consistency to match the flashes he has shown; his 2.2 assist average last season was the highest ever for a Texas power forward. Kris Clack hasn't developed the shooting touch that would elevate him to All-American status, but he remains one of the Big 12's most versatile players. Clack enters the season just 19 steals and 23 blocks shy of joining Danny Manning as the only players from Big 12 schools with 200 career steals and 100 career blocks.

Backcourt: Long one of the nation's most deadly and fearless outside shooting teams, the Longhorns might have run out of shooters. DeJuan Vazquez finally was moved to shooting guard, allowing either Bernard Smith or recruit Nathaniel Bailey to take over the point. But Smith announced plans to transfer to Houston and Bailey did not qualify academically. That means Vazquez likely will have to play his entire career out of position unless freshman Vohn Hunter, recruited as a scorer, can run the offense. Either Vazquez, Clack or Hunter will have to provide the shooting range lost when Luke Axtell transferred to Kansas after the fallout from an odd postseason showdown with former coach Tom Penders.

Key to success: It seems a safe bet that Mihm and Muoneke will become consistent forces in Barnes' halfcourt offense. But someone will have to provide the outside touch to draw out the defense. If not, too much of that burden will continue to fall to Vazquez and Clack, taking away from the things they always have done well. The Longhorns also must improve on the defensive end. No Big 12 team has given up more points in the two-year history of the league.

Outlook: The transition to the different style and philosophy of Barnes will take some time, and Penders, now at George Washington, already has cackled about the brutal schedule (Georgia, UMass, Utah, Wisconsin, Arizona) he left his successor. But he also left talent more suited to Barnes' style. By the time the conference season starts, Texas could be a force.

Longhorns Data

Coach: Rick Barnes (first season; 202-134 overall, 11 years; 2-6 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 14-17. Big 12: 6-10/10th.

Starters lost (1): Luke Axtell, G (13.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 73.7 FT%, 28.7 mpg; transfer/Kansas).

Others lost: Ira Clark, F/C (6.2 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 51.7 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 17.2 mpg); Anthony Goode, G (9.4 mpg; transfer/UT-Arlington); Brandy Perryman, G (5.8 ppg, 91.7 FT%, 16.3 mpg); Bernard Smith, G, 6-3/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 85.3 FT%, 22.2 mpg; left team).

Starters returning (4): Kris Clack, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (17.3 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 72.9 FT%, 3.2 apg, 2.0 spg, 33.0 mpg); Chris Mihm, C, 7-0/Soph. (12.4 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 51.4 FG%,



JAY CHIFFIELD / SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

White, who battled injuries in his Missouri debut, showed a huge upside last season.

2.9 bpg, 24.8 mpg); Nnadubem Muoneke, F, 6-7/Jr. (10.4 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 1.0 spg, 25.9 mpg); DeJuan Vazquez, G, 6-4/Sr. (7.5 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 35.2 3-pt%, 22.6 mpg).
Other returnees: Wendell Carter, F, 6-9/Sr.; Marlon Drakes, C/F, 6-8/Sr.; Ivan Wagner, G, 6-1/Jr. (10.6 mpg).
Top newcomers: William Clay, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Vohn Hunter, G, 6-3/Fr.
Last league title: 1995 (tie, SWC).
Last NCAA appearance: 1997.
Site: Austin, Texas. **Home court:** Erwin Center (16,042).

5. MISSOURI

Frontcourt: The Tigers will have a certain solar-system look about them. A lot of smaller bodies rotating around one giant center of gravity: 335-pound Monte Hardge. Hardge, one of MU's two seniors, improved steadily last year as a scorer and a defender. At the forward spots, Albert White showed a huge upside when he wasn't down with one injury or another. If healthy, he is one of the top players in the league. Jeff Hafer, the other starter, was the stereotypical hard-nosed Norm Stewart player, someone whose contributions can't be measured only on a stat sheet. For potential, there is Johnnie Parker, a former Missouri prep star with a year of experience. Many people thought Parker was a better high school player than Larry Hughes, a fellow St. Louisian now in the NBA. Mizzou received a blow when Travis Robinson, a top-50 recruit, de-committed in August.

Backcourt: Stewart found the right combination midway through the '97-98 season, and both players return. Off-guard John Woods hit 39 percent of his 3-pointers and is Mizzou's top returning scorer. But it was Brian Grawner who really made the difference. As a freshman, Grawner gave the Tigers the point guard they had sought for several years, shooting 46 percent from beyond the arc and showing floor leadership well beyond his years. Now they'll have the luxury of depth as well, with third-team Parade All-American Keyon Dooling and Clarence Gilbert, Dooling's teammate at Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) Dillard, among the five newcomers. Dooling,

an gifted ballhandler and excellent defender, is the most highly touted recruit to step on the MU campus in quite a while.

Key to success: At age 63 and on the heels of three consecutive disappointing seasons, Stewart is going back into teaching. Thanks to a recruiting class ranked among the nation's 10 best by many observers, Mizzou has more talent than it has had in years. It also has one of its youngest teams in years, with seven freshmen or sophomores on the 12-man roster. How long it takes Stewart to get them playing as a team will be critical.

Outlook: The first step is to mold all the young parts into a team. The second step is to win one on the road, which the Tigers haven't done since February 13, 1996 (23 games ago). Get those out of the way, stay hot at home (where Mizzou rarely falters) and the NCAA Tournament is within reach.

Tigers Data

Coach: Norm Stewart (614-324, 31 years; 711-366 overall, 37 years; 12-15 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 17-15. Big 12: 8-8/T5th. Lost to UAB in NIT first round.
Starters lost (2): Dibi Ray, G (1.1 spg, 17.3 mpg); Kelly Thames, F (14.8 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 78.3 FT%, 1.0 spg, 32.3 mpg).
Others lost: Tyron Lee, F/G (11.6 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 76.5 FT%, 23.5 mpg); George Mazyck, F (transfer/JC).
Starters returning (3): Jeff Hafer, F, 6-5/Jr. (5.8 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 46.2 FG%, 76.3 FT%, 27.0 mpg); Monte Hardge, C, 6-11/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 19.8 mpg); John Woods, G, 6-3/Sr. (11.4 ppg, 78.6 FT%, 38.6 3-pt%, 24.8 mpg).
Other returnees: Brian Grawner, G, 6-0/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 45.6 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 23.2 mpg); Johnnie Parker, G/F, 6-6/Soph. (35.4 3-pt%, 13.1 mpg); Albert White, F, 6-5/Jr. (10.9 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 71.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 22.9 mpg).
Top newcomers: Keyon Dooling, G, 6-3/Fr.; Clarence Gilbert, G, 6-2/Fr.; Matt Rowan, F, 6-7/Fr.; Pat Schumacher, C, 7-0/Fr.
Last league title: 1994 (Big Eight).
Last NCAA appearance: 1995.
Site: Columbia, Mo. **Home court:** Hearn Center (13,300).

6. IOWA STATE

Frontcourt: Hired away from Utah State to replace Bulls-bound Tim Floyd, Larry Eustachy walks into a no-brainer situation. His first Cyclones team absolutely has to be built around Marcus Fizer. A landslide winner of last year's Big 12 Freshman of the Year award, Fizer almost single-handedly carried ISU through a frustrating 12-18 season, leading the team in scoring in 13 of its last 20 games. Supporting Fizer in the paint are two small-town products (Klay Edwards, from Morning Sun, Iowa, and Paul Shirley, from Meriden, Kan.), two 7-footers (junior Tony Rampton and JC transfer Dwayne Johns), and Martin Rancik, another sophomore who came on late in the year.

Backcourt: There's a reason no guards are listed among the Cyclones' "players to watch": They didn't have any worth watching last season. This year, it was Floyd's plan to hand the point guard position to Michael Nurse, a JC transfer whom the former coach compared to NBA All-Star Tim Hardaway. Eustachy will have his pick of number of off-guards, but the most likely candidates are

Jerry Curry and JC transfer Rodney Hampton, who averaged 28 points a game last season.

Keys to success: As with all Floyd teams, last year's Cyclones could defend. They just couldn't score. Eustachy, an assistant to Floyd 12 years ago at Idaho, promises the same defense but a more up-tempo style. ISU needs to get the ball up the court without turning it over, which it did 25 percent more than its opponents last year. It also would help if someone other than Fizer can put the ball in the basket consistently.

Outlook: A lot of variables figure into how the Cyclones will bounce back from last year's frustration, which included a 2-12 record in road games. But at least an easy non-conference schedule (spiced by a December 19 game against Arizona) will give them a chance to adjust to their new coach—and each other—before the Big 12 grind.

Cyclones Data

Coach: Larry Eustachy (first year; 159-86 overall, 8 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 12-18. Big 12: 5-11/11th.
Starters lost (1): Brad Johnson, G/F (18.2 mpg).
Others lost: Matt Knoll, G (13.0 mpg); Walter Moore, C/F (transfer/JC); Chris Ridens, C/F (transfer/JC).
Starters returning (4): Klay Edwards, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (9.3 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 56.6 FG%, 27.0 mpg); Marcus Fizer, F, 6-8/Soph. (14.9 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 1.1 spg, 27.2 mpg); Stevie Johnson, F, 6-4/Jr. (7.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 23.9 mpg); Paul Shirley, F, 6-10/Jr. (8.1 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 58.2 FG%, 71.5 FT%, 22.6 mpg).
Other returnees: Paris Corner, G, 6-0/Soph.; Jerry Curry, G, 6-1/Sr. (7.8 ppg, 36.4 3-pt%, 20.1 mpg); Tony Rampton, C, 7-0/Jr. (RS/back); Martin Rancik, F, 6-9/Soph. (5.7 ppg, 72.1 FT%, 14.1 mpg); Jason Teeter, G, 6-5/Jr.
Top newcomers: Lamar Gregg, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Deionta Hagwood, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Rodney Hampton, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Dwayne Johns, C, 7-1/Jr. (JC); Anthony Lloyd, G, 6-3/Fr.; Michael Nurse, G, 5-11/Jr. (JC).
Last league title: 1945 (Big Eight).
Last NCAA appearance: 1997.
Site: Ames, Iowa. **Home court:** Hilton Coliseum (14,020).

7. NEBRASKA

Frontcourt: The Huskers return so many players up front you would think this was their football team. Venson Hamilton ranked second in the Big 12 in rebounding last year—he also scored in double figures and averaged a couple of blocks a game—and is a good bet to improve on his honorable mention all-league status as a senior. Larry Florence, a two-year starter, was NU's fourth-leading scorer at nine points a game, but he is capable of much more. Andy Markowski, who started 26 games, is a solid complement at big forward. Troy Piatkowski had a knack for hitting the big shot in relief. To top it off, newcomer Louis Truscott is considered one of the top 150 recruits in the country.

Backcourt: Cookie Belcher isn't going to make anyone forget his distant cousin, NBA first-round pick Tyrone Lue. But from his off-guard spot, Belcher, a two-year starter, dealt almost as many assists as his former teammate while ranking third on the team in scoring and earning a spot on the conference's all-defensive team. Lue's spot in the lineup prob-

ably will go to JC transfer Joe Holmes, who averaged 8.1 assists last year. Rodney Fields, Holmes' JC teammate, will back up Belcher.

Key to success: How well Nebraska does will have a lot to do with how well it adjusts to life after Lue. Replacing his leadership is every bit as important as replacing his 21 points a game. On the plus side, Lue was the only player of consequence the Huskers lost, and the returning players have a combined 218 career starts.

Outlook: The Huskers returned to the NCAA Tournament last season after a three-year absence. With 70 percent of the points and 87 percent of the rebounds returning, there's reason to believe they can do it again. This is a deep, talented team, but Holmes must come through.

Cornhuskers Data

Coach: Danny Nee (223-158, 12 years; 303-225 overall, 18 years; 1-7 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-12, Big 12: 10-6/4th. Lost to Arkansas in NCAA West first round.

Starters lost (1): Tyrone Lue, G (21.2 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 82.8 FT%, 37.3 3-pt%, 4.8 apg, 2.0 spg, 35.9 mpg; declared for NBA draft).

Others lost: Chad Burbach, F; Michael Johnette, G; Ryan Phifer, G; Rodney Williams, G (transfer).

Starters returning (4): Cookie Belcher, G, 6-4/Jr. (11.1 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 3.9 apg, 2.3 spg, 30.7 mpg); Larry Florence, F, 6-5/Sr. (8.9 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 1.1 spg, 22.5 mpg); Venson Hamilton, C, 6-10/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 9.8 rpg, 51.7 FG%, 1.7 spg, 2.1 bpg, 29.3 mpg); Andy Markowski, F, 6-8/Sr. (6.6 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 1.4 spg, 28.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Chad Johnson, F, 6-6/Sr. (17.9 mpg); Brant Harriman, C, 6-10/Soph. (50.0 FG%, 77.1 FT%, 10.8 mpg); Troy Piatkowski, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (6.4 ppg, 2.5 rpg, 22.9 mpg); Todd Smith, G, 6-4/Fr. (RS/legs).

Top newcomers: Cary Cochran, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS/heel); Rodney Fields, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Joe Holmes, G, 5-11/Jr. (JC); Louis Truscott, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1950 (tie, Big Eight).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Lincoln, Neb. **Home court:** Devaney Sports Center (14,200).

8. KANSAS STATE

Frontcourt: K-State returns 82 percent of its scoring, and forward Manny Dies represents a big chunk of those. In fact, Dies, a second-team All-Big 12 pick last season, led the Wildcats in four statistical categories—scoring, field goal percentage, rebounds and blocks—last season. He is complemented by Shawn Rhodes and Josh Reid, both of whom need to become more physical. Rhodes was the only Wildcat to start every game last year. Ty Sims is undersized for a power forward, but wasn't bad as Dies' backup.

Backcourt: Duane Davis, a transfer from Arizona State, solidified the team at point guard with a 2-to-1 assist-to-turnover ratio and the ability to pull up occasionally for the 3-pointer. The off-guard spot could go to Ayome May, K-State's top returning starter a year ago. But May left the starting lineup midway through last season because he played better off the bench. JC transfer Cortez Groves may be a more likely candidate. Whoever plays there had better be able to shoot; inconsistent perimeter shooting killed the Wildcats last season.



JAY CRUICKSHANK / SPURLOCK PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

After arriving from junior college, Price emerged as the Buffaloes' go-to guy.

Key to success: Kansas State bounced off the bottom of the league by improving seven games last season. Now it's time to win on the road in the conference, which it has done just once in the past two seasons.

Outlook: Last year, the Wildcats were 15-6 before losing six of their last eight. This time around, with 13 lettermen back, this deep, experienced team may have what it takes to finish and make it back to the NCAA Tournament after a two-year absence.

Wildcats Data

Coach: Tom Asbury (56-56, 4 years; 181-115 overall, 10 years; 0-4 NCAA Tournament record.)

1997-98 record: 17-12, Big 12: 7-9/7th. Lost to NC State in NIT first round.

Starters lost (1): Aaron Swartzendruber, G (9.0 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 83.6 FT%, 3.4 apg, 1.5 spg, 27.4 mpg).

Others lost: Charles Dinkins, F (left team); Adam Lopez, G (9.9 mpg; transfer); Marcus McCollough, G/F (7.6 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 60.4 FG%, 18.3 mpg); Pero Vasiljevic, F (10.1 mpg; left team).

Starters returning (4): Duane Davis, G, 5-11/Jr. (7.2 ppg, 84.2 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 1.3 spg, 22.5 mpg); Manny Dies, F, 6-9/Sr. (15.7 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 54.7 FG%, 1.9 bpg, 26.8 mpg); Josh Reid, G, 6-6/Jr. (6.6 ppg, 36.7 3-pt%, 15.1 mpg); Shawn Rhodes, C/F, 6-11/Sr. (11.2

ppg, 5.5 rpg, 45.7 FG%, 36.0 3-pt%, 1.3 bpg, 28.8 mpg). **Other returnees:** Chris Griffin, G, 6-2/Sr. (46.9 FG%, 15.9 mpg); Jay Heidrick, F, 6-6/Sr.; Joe Leonard, C, 7-0/Soph.; Ayome May, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (7.6 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 70.8 FT%, 22.3 mpg); Ty Sims, F, 6-5/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 53.5 FG%, 79.3 FT%, 15.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: Kenyatta Dix, G, 6-1/Fr.; Cortez Groves, G, Jr. (JC); Josh Kimm, G, 6-1/Fr.; Tony Kitt, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Travis Reynolds, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1977 (Big Eight).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Manhattan, Kan. **Home court:** Bramlage Coliseum (13,500).

9. COLORADO

Frontcourt: Do the math and you see that the returning frontcourt players averaged a grand total of 6.6 points and 5.4 rebounds last year. But in this case, the figures may lie. First, power forward Jamahl Mosley was limited to 19 games because of a fractured left hand. Second, coach Ricardo Patton brought in four forwards, including twin towers Carlton Carter and Steve Ryan. And third, he has a secret weapon in swingman Tyron Manlove, who was rumored to be the best player on the court last season when he practiced with the team after transferring from Oregon. Swingman Will Smith needs to be more consistent than he was last season.

Backcourt: CU spent a good chunk of last season searching for a go-to guy and finally found it in off-guard Kenny Price, a JC transfer who wound up as the Big 12 newcomer of the year after hitting a school-record 90 3-pointers. The good news is this season he'll have someone to get him the ball: point guards Jaquay Walls, a JC transfer, and Jose Winston, a highly touted prep playmaker from Milwaukee.

Key to success: Right now, it's Price and roll the dice. Patton will choose from Mosley, Smith, towering guard Aki Thomas and seven newcomers to fill in around his big gun. How well he does it will determine Colorado's fortunes.

Outlook: It took the Buffs only a year to settle below the .500 mark again after Chauncey Billups led them to their first NCAA Tournament since 1969 before taking off for the NBA. In his fourth year as coach, it looks as if Patton has the pieces in place to make another postseason run. The key is Mosley, who must stay healthy.

Buffaloes Data

Coach: Ricardo Patton (39-32, 3 years; 1-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-14, Big 12: 7-9/7th.

Starters lost (3): Ronnie DeGray, F (12.2 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 1.5 bpg, 30.2 mpg); Marlon Hughes, G (9.8 ppg, 76.8 FT%, 3.6 apg, 1.2 spg, 26.1 mpg); Charlie Melvin, C (10.9 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 27.2 mpg).

Others lost: Howard Frier, G (4.5 ppg, 3.8 apg, 1.3 spg, 22.9 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Kenny Price, G, 6-4/Sr. (14.5 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 80.0 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 31.2 mpg); Will Smith, F/G, 6-6/Jr. (5.5 ppg, 74.3 3-pt%, 15.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Dwight Jones, G, 5-11/Sr. (4.0 ppg, 40.9 3-pt%, 16.9 mpg); Jamahl Mosley, F, 6-8/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 16.5 mpg); Ernest Renfro, F, 6-7/Soph.; Aki Thomas, G, 6-8/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 11.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Carlton Carter, F, 6-10/Fr.; Tyron Manlove, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (transfer/Oregon); Nick Mohr, G,

6-4/Fr.; Steve Ryan, F/C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Jaquay Walls, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Kyle Williams, G, 6-6/Fr.; Jose Winston, G, 6-0/Fr.

Last league title: 1969 (Big Eight).

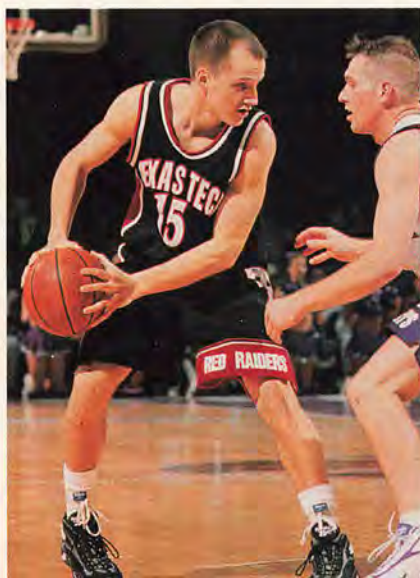
Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Boulder, Colo. **Home court:** Coors Events/Conference Center (11,076).

10. TEXAS TECH

Frontcourt: Cliff Owens emerged as a surprisingly effective and physical inside player last season. But there's a sense Johnny Phillips could take off as a scorer. Ross Carmichael also can be a solid backup. But coach James Dickey will look for more from four frontcourt recruits, including the top one, freshman Andy Ellis. Ellis should be Tech's most talented all-around big man since Tony Battie left Lubbock after his junior season in 1997.

Backcourt: In Rayford Young, a super quick and tested point guard, and Stan Bonewitz, one of the league's best pure shooters, Tech would seem to have an ideal backcourt mix. But neither has been close to a go-



Bonewitz is one of the Big 12's best shooters, but he hasn't developed into a go-to guy.

to guy, Cory Carr having handled that burden for several seasons. Recruit Jevon Banks could add the outside shooting threat the Red Raiders will need.

Keys to success: Dickey has a good idea what he'll get from Young and Bonewitz, but it's unlikely either will develop into Carr and become the league's most irrepressible scorer. Tech will have to get much more from Phillips and Owens inside and find some scoring punch off the bench to make up for losing Carr and Battie in consecutive seasons.

Outlook: Expect Dickey to get the most out of the talent on hand. But depending on how much he can get out of the recruits quickly, Tech seems just a bit light on talent. As solid as Bonewitz and Young are, Tech will have to be more balanced between the front

and backcourt, which could be asking too much from Owens and Phillips.

Red Raiders Data

Coach: James Dickey (132-72, 7 years; 2-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-14. Big 12: 7-9/77th.

Starters lost (1): Cory Carr, G (23.3 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 49.4 FG%, 86.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 37.5 mpg).

Others lost: Brock Barnes, G/F (9.8 mpg); Archie Myers, G (13.5 mpg); Da'Mon Roberts, F (3.0 rpg, 47.5 FG%, 17.3 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Stan Bonewitz, G, 6-3/Sr. (12.9 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 76.8 FT%, 41.8 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.1 spg, 35.9 mpg); Cliff Owens, F, 6-8/Jr. (10.2 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 59.2 FG%, 27.0 mpg); Johnny Phillips, C, 6-10/Soph. (5.2 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 59.2 FG%, 15.8 mpg); Rayford Young, G, 5-11/Jr. (15.4 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 84.3 FT%, 39.3 3-pt%, 4.3 apg, 1.7 spg, 34.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Ross Carmichael, C, 6-10/Jr. (4.4 rpg, 53.2 FG%, 21.4 mpg); Andrew Patterson, G, 6-4/Jr. **Top newcomers:** Jevon Banks, G, 5-11/Soph. (JC); Andy Ellis, C, 6-10/Fr.; Brodney Kennard, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Mario Layne, F/G, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Jayson Mitchell, F, 6-5/Soph. (JC); James Ware, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1996 (SWC).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Lubbock, Texas. **Home court:** Lubbock Municipal Coliseum (8,174).

11. TEXAS A&M

Frontcourt: New coach Melvin Watkins will immediately benefit from his team's improved health. Dario Quesada, a center with a soft outside shooting touch, is back after missing last season with a back injury. Calvin Davis is back after missing almost all of conference play with the same injury. Aaron Jack is a banger, and Joe White is by far A&M's best big-man prospect in years. But forward Shanne Jones is the key, an underrated scorer who likes pressure.

Backcourt: Jerald Brown, a junior who was one of the most heralded recruits ever at Texas A&M, has not panned out after showing flashes of promise as a freshman. He is not without ability. Canadian Michael Schmidt could be the player Brown was expected to be, an outstanding athlete with a good shooting touch. With Brian Barone choosing to transfer after the dismissal of his father, coach Tony, Steve Houston would have had the point guard job to himself. But Houston was dismissed from the team in August, leaving the position to JC transfer Clifton Cook or little-used Chris Clayton and T.J. Brown.

Keys to success: A&M has been solid in every area but one. Unfortunately, that area has been shooting, which is sort of vital. Jones can score, but Watkins needs Brown or Schmidt, and maybe both, to develop.

Outlook: If A&M can avoid the injuries that hit last season and find a point guard, the Aggies should improve quickly. They still seem to be a few shooters short, but there are possibilities.

Aggies Data

Coach: Melvin Watkins (first year; 42-20 overall, 2 years; 2-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 7-20. Big 12: 1-15/12th.

Starters lost (2): Brian Barone, G (4.8 apg, 2.3 spg, 29.4 mpg; transfer/Marquette); Larry Thompson, C (7.3 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 54.5 FG%, 19.8 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Calvin Davis, F, 6-8/Sr. (13.8 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 51.5 FG%, 80.7 FT%, 1.5 spg, 2.3 bpg, 22.0 mpg); Steve Houston, G, 6-1/Jr. (9.5 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 35.1 3-pt%, 4.4 apg, 2.5 spg, 30.6 mpg); Shanne Jones, F, 6-5/Sr. (18.0 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 50.4 FG%, 1.1 spg, 29.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Jerald Brown, G/F, 6-8/Jr. (7.4 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 1.2 spg, 22.0 mpg); T.J. Brown, G, 6-1/Soph.; Chris Clayton, G, 6-3/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 14.6 mpg); Aaron Jack, F, 6-8/Soph. (8.3 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 47.3 FG%, 22.7 mpg); Dario Quesada, C, 6-9/Sr. (RS/back); Chris Richards, C, 6-10/Sr. (4.0 ppg); Michael Schmidt, G, 6-5/Soph. (8.9 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 1.0 spg, 24.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jason Boeker, F, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/Alabama-Huntsville); Clifton Cook, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Larry Jackson, C, 6-10/Fr.; Joe White, C, 6-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1986 (Ile, SWC).

Last NCAA appearance: 1987.

Site: College Station, Texas. **Home court:** Reed Arena (12,500).

12. BAYLOR

Frontcourt: For the first time in years, Baylor will not be accused of ignoring the plentiful talents of center Brian Skinner, as Skinner finally has taken his myriad skills to the NBA. As hard as he will be to replace, Skinner did not put up numbers his successors will be unable to touch. Kish Lewis can work his way to much of Skinner's points and rebounds, and Gabe Ramirez will have to become a much more consistent scorer.

Backcourt: Last season's backcourt of Patrick Hunter and Rodrick Miller is gone, and B.J. Sellers and David Jones struggled when forced by injuries to play last season. Both have ability, but a better solution might be finding a way for the talented Leon "Brick" Morris to lose his nickname. Recruits Tevis Stukes and Robert Thornton might have to help immediately.

Keys to success: The big men will be able to do enough dirty work to hold their own. Coach Harry Miller better rebuild his backcourt. And even then, the Bears have to find scorers.

Outlook: It doesn't look good. The schedule is manageable, but Skinner, Hunter and Rodrick Miller carried the Bears last season. There seems little on hand to pick up that much slack.

Bears Data

Coach: Harry Miller (50-63, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 14-14. Big 12: 8-8/75th.

Starters lost (3): Patrick Hunter, G (12.8 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 73.7 FT%, 4.2 apg, 1.3 spg, 36.7 mpg); Rodrick Miller, G (11.9 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 70.5 FT%, 40.2 3-pt%, 3.9 apg, 1.1 spg, 34.1 mpg); Brian Skinner, C (18.1 ppg, 9.5 rpg, 55.3 FG%, 1.4 spg, 3.5 bpg, 36.5 mpg).

Others lost: Rahsaan Jones, F (9.3 mpg); John Perkins, G (4.5 ppg, 18.3 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Jamie Kendrick, F, 6-8/Jr. (6.0 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 20.9 mpg); Leon Morris, F, 6-6/Jr. (6.3 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 22.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Jeff Gipson, F, 6-8/Sr.; David Jones, G, 6-6/Jr. (9.7 mpg); Kish Lewis, F/C, 6-7/Sr. (5.8 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 12.1 mpg); Grant McCasland, G, 5-9/Sr.; Gabe Ramirez, F/C, 6-7/Sr. (5.1 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 79.2 FT%, 41.5 3-pt%, 17.2 mpg); B.J. Sellers, G, 6-3/Jr. (11.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Marcus Golsen, F/G, 6-7/Fr. (RS); Tevis Stukes, G, 5-11/Jr. (JC); Robert Thornton, G, 6-4/Fr.

Last league title: 1950 (Ile, SWC).

Last NCAA appearance: 1988.

Site: Waco, Texas. **Home court:** Ferrell Center (10,084).

inside dish

Ascending: Pittsburgh. At some point, the recent string of injuries that has plagued this program must end. If that happens, coach Ralph Willard has the talent to make an impact on the conference race and return to postseason play. The key is keeping the bench healthy.

Descending: Notre Dame. The slide down the Big East mountain actually began late last season. Remember those victories over West Virginia, St. John's and Syracuse that actually had people forecasting an NCAA bid for the Irish? Notre Dame gave a preview of this season when it took that momentum and promptly lost seven of its last nine games, ending up with no postseason bid at all. Life without Pat Garrity was bad enough, but Keith Friel's transfer to Virginia was an unexpected blow.

Biggest sneakers to fill: Notre Dame forward Pat Garrity's. The Irish couldn't win consistently with Garrity. Senior center Phil Hickey was second in scoring and rebounding behind Garrity and will be expected to carry an even bigger burden until freshman Troy Murphy gets his feet wet.

Most underrated player: Providence forward Jamel Thomas. He was asked to shoulder an incredible load during a rebuilding season, and he produced consistently and quietly—despite defensive schemes designed to stop him.

Most overrated player: Villanova guard John Celestand. He continues to start because the Wildcats haven't found anyone better, but Celestand hasn't lived up to the expectations he brought as a recruiting prize for Steve Lappas. Celestand was fourth in the conference in assists but that may be a reflection of a weak group of point guards in the conference last season. Perhaps Celestand can discover some leadership qualities as a senior.

Coach on hot seat: Notre Dame's John MacLeod. Thanks to the focus on football and all the problems on the gridiron, MacLeod may be the least of the problems in South Bend. But he hasn't gotten the job done.

Best bets: Every game UConn plays this season will be covered by the Connecticut media like it's the Super Bowl. The Huskies will be under enormous pressure because of their advance billing as a national championship contender. ... Rumors will persist about Syracuse leaving the Big East to join the Big Ten. And, as a result, rumors will persist that the Big East faces a total breakup. ... St. John's fans will miss Felipe Lopez more than they want to know. ... Richard Hamilton will skip his senior season at UConn and declare himself eligible for the NBA draft. ... Seton Hall coach Tommy Amaker will be mentioned as a candidate for at least three coaching jobs.

Odds and ends: With Tim Welsh taking over at Providence and Mike Jarvis at St. John's, five coaching jobs have switched hands over the past two seasons. Boston College's Al Skinner, Seton Hall's Tommy Amaker and Kevin Bannon of Rutgers enter year two in the Big East. ... The conference's regular-season schedule will be trimmed from 18 games to 16 beginning with the 1999-2000 season. The move has been made to allow the strengthening of non-conference schedules. ... There will be two new father-son coaching combinations in the conference. Mike Jarvis II joins the St. John's staff, and Ronny Thompson has been added to Georgetown's staff.



Celestand hasn't been the recruiting prize many thought he would be for Villanova.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. St. John's (G Erick Barkley). Second consecutive year that the Red Storm has produced the top class in the conference. Fran Fraschilla's gift to Mike Jarvis includes Barkley and junior college All-American Bootsy Thornton.
2. Syracuse (G Tony Bland).
3. Notre Dame (F Troy Murphy).
4. Miami (F John Salmons).
5. UConn (G/F Beau Archibald).
6. Villanova (G Bobby Smith).
7. Rutgers (G Dahntay Jones).
8. Seton Hall (F Manga Charles).
9. Pittsburgh (G Jeremy Holmes).
10. Georgetown (G Kevin Braswell).
11. West Virginia (C Calvin Bowman).
12. Providence (G Sean Connolly).
13. Boston College (F Osei Millar).

BY KEN DAVIS
Hartford (Conn.) Courant

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Connecticut | 8. Rutgers |
| 2. Syracuse | 9. West Virginia |
| 3. St. John's | 10. Seton Hall |
| 4. Pittsburgh | 11. Providence |
| 5. Georgetown | 12. Notre Dame |
| 6. Miami | 13. Boston College |
| 7. Villanova | |

ALL-BIG EAST

FIRST TEAM

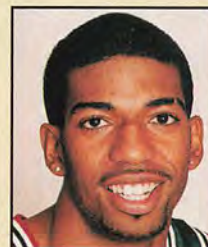
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/G	RON ARTEST, St. John's	6-6/233	Soph.
F	TIM JAMES, Miami	6-7/221	Sr.
C	ETAN THOMAS, Syracuse	6-9/231	Jr.
G	KHALID EL-AMIN, UConn	5-10/200	Soph.
G/F	RICHARD HAMILTON, UConn	6-6/185	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	RYAN BLACKWELL, Syracuse	6-8/220	Jr.
F	ISAAC HAWKINS, Pittsburgh	6-8/210	Jr.
F	JAMEL THOMAS, Providence	6-6/215	Sr.
G	VONTEEGO CUMMINGS, Pittsburgh	6-5/190	Sr.
G	SHAHEEN HOLLOWAY, Seton Hall	5-10/175	Jr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

RICHARD HAMILTON, G/F, UConn



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

ERICK BARKLEY, G, St. John's

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter:** Richard Hamilton, UConn.
Best rebounder: Isaac Hawkins, Pittsburgh.
Best playmaker: Shaheen Holloway, Seton Hall.
Best defender: Etan Thomas, Syracuse.
Best leaper: Tim James, Miami.
Most versatile: Vonteego Cummings, Pittsburgh.
Most flamboyant: Khalid El-Amin, UConn.
Best NBA prospect: Richard Hamilton, UConn.

BIG EAST

1. CONNECTICUT

Frontcourt: The outlook here would be even better if recruit Ajou Ajou Deng had satisfied academic requirements for eligibility, but the Huskies will have to get along without him. Shed no tears. The depth is better than at any other time the Huskies have been favored to win the Big East, which they've done four of the past five years. Center Jake Voskuhl continued to improve as a sophomore. Voskuhl isn't a consistent source of offense but when he stays out of foul trouble, he can be a force up front. Forward Kevin Freeman, who gave some thought to transferring, will be asked to provide muscle and rebounding again—even though he would like to spend more time on the wing. Center Souleymane Wane, who had played just one season of organized basketball before arriving in Storrs, got his college career off to a good start in the second half of the season and is a weapon as a shot blocker. Forward Edmund Saunders could provide extra muscle after getting rid of the rust from sitting out last season as a non-qualifier. Antric Klaiber, a lefty, can play any of the frontcourt positions, which helps make the Huskies' parts that much more interchangeable. Recruit Justin Brown, a 7-0 center from Australia, hails from the same school (the Australian Institute of Sports in Canberra) as Bulls center Luc Longley.

Backcourt: Richard Hamilton, the returning Big East player of the year and candidate for national player of the year, once again will be the focus of the offense. A swingman who could be considered a third guard in the lineup, Hamilton can create and score, particularly in the clutch. He suffered a broken metatarsal bone in his right foot during tryouts for the U.S. World Championship team in July, but that might be a blessing in disguise. He is expected to be completely healed in time for the start of practice in October, and because of an existing hairline fracture, it seems the injury would have taken place eventually. Point guard Khalid El-Amin, with his bubbly and enthusiastic style, should become a popular player on the national level. It will be hard to watch a UConn game without noticing the stocky, effervescent sophomore who can score as well as direct the Huskies' running game. El-Amin, who was the Big East rookie of the year last season, figures to be a better player after spending the summer on the gold medal-winning Goodwill Games team, where he learned the rigors of physical international play. Ricky Moore, who lifted his defensive game to a new level, is back for his senior season and will be a key presence in a defense that held opponents to a 39.3 field-goal percentage and was particularly tough in its halfcourt setup. Add Rashamel Jones, who has played in more games than anyone on the team and provided a big boost off the bench last postseason; JC transfer Beau Archibald, a former starter at Utah State who missed the bulk of last season at Utah Valley State after surgery on both knees for patella tendinitis; Albert Mouring; and E.J. Harrison to the rotation, and the Huskies have a ton of interchangeable parts.

Keys to success: Experience, poise and depth. The Huskies have plenty of experience, returning the starting five for the second consecutive season. Do they have the poise to handle the Final Four predictions? An overseas trip in August might have provided the bonding opportunity this team needs.

Outlook: UConn and coach Jim Calhoun never have been in a better position for a shot at the national championship. Calhoun has taken the Huskies to the final eight three times (1990, 1995 and last season) and fallen short. The disappointment of losing to North Carolina in Greensboro in the final eight could be a driving force for this team, which went undefeated at home last year. Regular-season games against Michigan State in December and at Stanford in February, not to mention the Great Eight matchup/rematch with Washington on December 1, will give UConn a gauge for its chances of reaching the Final Four.



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Moore is back for his senior season and will be a key presence in a defense that held foes to a 39.3 field-goal percentage last season.

Huskies Data

Coach: Jim Calhoun (270-118, 12 years; 520-255 overall, 26 years; 19-12 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 32-5. Big East 6: 15-3/1st. Lost to North Carolina in NCAA East finals.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Monquencio Hardnett, G (5.4 ppg, 16.2 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Khalid El-Amin, G, 5-10/Soph. (16.0 ppg, 79.6 FT%, 36.5 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.8 spg, 29.9 mpg); Kevin Freeman, F, 6-7/Jr. (10.3 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 56.9 FG%, 29.5 mpg); Richard Hamilton, G/F, 6-6/Jr. (21.5 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 84.3 FT%, 40.4 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 32.5 mpg); Ricky Moore, G, 6-2/Sr. (7.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 72.9 FT%, 3.5 apg, 1.6 spg, 30.3 mpg); Jake Voskuhl, C, 6-11/Jr. (6.9 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 56.5 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 23.7 mpg).

Other returnees: E.J. Harrison, G, 6-1/Sr.; Rashamel Jones, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (4.4 ppg, 14.3 mpg); Antric Klaiber, F, 6-10/Sr. (57.6 FG%, 70.4 FT%, 13.5 mpg); Albert Mouring, G, 6-3/Soph.; Souleymane Wane, C, 6-11/Jr. (3.8 rpg, 1.1 bpg, 11.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Beau Archibald, G/F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Justin Brown, C, 7-0/Fr.; Edmund Saunders, F, 6-8/Soph. (Prop 48).

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Storrs, Conn. **Home courts:** Hartford Civic Center (16,294); Gampel Pavilion (10,027).

2. SYRACUSE

Frontcourt: The emergence of Etan Thomas last season gives the Orangemen hope for a front line that is as strong as any since the days Derrick Coleman roamed the paint in the late '80s. Thomas earned the conference's award as most improved player, largely on the strength of his 138 blocked shots (which broke Coleman's school single-season record). But Thomas became a factor offensively late in the season when his teammates figured out it might be a good idea to get the ball to the big guy close to the basket. As a result, Thomas doubled his scoring average from his freshman year. After transferring from Illinois, forward Ryan Blackwell got off to a fast start for the Orangemen, fell into a slump, then bounced back, leading the team in rebounding and finishing second in scoring. Blackwell, an intelligent player who can play either forward spot and hit the "3" as well as anyone on the team, and Thomas figure to be fixtures in the lineup. But replacing do-everything Todd Burgan's team-leading 615 points at small forward won't be easy. Candidates for the spot include senior Elvir Ovcina, who is a good high-post complement who can hit the "3"; power forward Eric Williams; Damone Brown; and center Billy Celuck, who sat out last season as a partial qualifier.

Backcourt: Review any game tape of Syracuse the past two years and chances are if the Orangemen won big, point guard Jason Hart played a good game. When he is on, Syracuse can be unbeatable. Unfortunately, Hart hasn't been consistent. But he's a strong guard who knows the system. If his game shows that maturity as a junior, it will be a big plus. The other backcourt spot is open, and the departure of Marius Janulis means coach Jim Boeheim needs to find some outside shooting. At times late last season, the speedy Allen Griffin looked like an All-Big East player (he totaled 148 minutes and 45 points in his last 11 games, almost doubling his output of his first 23 games), so he should be given first shot. Malik Campbell and highly regarded freshman Tony Bland are waiting in the wings, as is freshman Preston Shumpert. Campbell, who played 15 games last season, surprised everyone, including Boeheim, by announcing in mid-August that he was quitting the Syracuse football team to devote all his attention to basketball. Campbell had hopes of playing quarterback some day but would have been sitting behind Donovan McNabb this season. By joining basketball on the first day of practice, Campbell should battle Griffin and Bland for the spot left by Janulis.

Keys to success: There's no doubt the Orangemen will have muscle up front. If Thomas can control the lane and the team can mix in some consistent outside shooting, Syracuse has endless possibilities. The pressure is on the backcourt to shoot well, stay under control and make smart decisions. Consistency would be a big help, too. When Syracuse lost last season, it had a tendency to let up after falling behind.

Outlook: The Orangemen went to the Final Four in 1996, then tumbled back to the NIT in 1997, making last season an important one for Boeheim's program. The Orangemen responded by winning the Big East 7, advancing to the Big East Tournament title game and reaching the Sweet 16 before losing to Duke. That sets the stage for success this season. But no one will replace Burgan, the underrated master of versatility. And trying to replace Janulis at the same time would seem to be



When Hart is on, Syracuse can be unbeatable. Unfortunately, Hart hasn't been consistent. But he's a strong point guard who knows the system. If his game shows maturity, it will be a plus.

a major task for Boeheim. But he has a strong nucleus, led by Thomas and Blackwell, and some superb newcomers. The team is young, with Ovcina the only senior and the returning starters the only juniors. Look for the Orangemen to start putting things together by late January, gain Boeheim's 21st 20-win season in 23 years at Syracuse and make a nice run in the NCAA Tournament.

Orangemen Data

Coach: Jim Boeheim (528-181, 22 years; 29-18 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 26-9. Big East 7: 12-6/1st. Lost to Duke in NCAA South semifinals.

Starters lost (2): Todd Burgan, F (17.6 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 74.9 FT%, 36.6 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 2.1 spg, 36.7 mpg); Marius Janulis, G (9.6 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 83.3 FT%, 39.6 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 32.5 mpg).

Others lost: LaSean Howard, G/F (transfer/Long Beach State); Sam Spann, F (transfer/Boston U.).

Starters returning (3): Ryan Blackwell, F, 6-8/Jr. (12.6 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 47.8 FG%, 1.4 spg, 35.0 mpg); Jason Hart, G, 6-3/Jr. (10.2 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 5.0 apg, 2.3 spg, 34.2 mpg); Etan Thomas, C, 6-9/Jr. (11.3 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 61.0 FG%, 3.9 bpg, 28.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Damone Brown, F, 6-8/Soph.; Malik Campbell, G, 6-3/Soph.; Allen Griffin, G, 6-1/Soph. (9.2 mpg); Elvir Ovcina, C, 6-11/Sr.; Eric Williams, F, 6-9/Soph.

Top newcomers: Tony Bland, G, 6-4/Fr.; Billy Celuck, C, 7-1/Soph. (Prop 48); Kueth Duany, F, 6-7/Fr.; Preston Shumpert, G, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1992.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Syracuse, N.Y. **Home court:** Carrier Dome (33,000).

3. ST. JOHN'S

Frontcourt: Most programs would cringe at the thought of replacing four-year starters such as Felipe Lopez and Zendon Hamilton. Lopez was a first-team all-conference selection, and Hamilton made the second team as the league's third-leading rebounder. But those who have followed the Red Storm in recent years realize a fresh start might be the best thing for the program. Considering the young talent in the frontcourt, St. John's actually shapes up as a legitimate contender for a Big East title. Forwards Ron Artest and Lavor Postell have proven they are capable—if not special—Big East players. Artest was a unanimous pick to the all-rookie team, and Postell has added offense to his already stellar defense. The Red Storm won't be tall and lack a dominating center, but Tyrone Grant is back for his senior season at power forward and JC transfer Albert Richardson brings more bulk to the roster.

Backcourt: Is freshman Erick Barkley the point guard St. John's has been waiting for? All indications are that the prep All-American can become the true lead guard Red Storm fans have craved. Collin Charles also returns to provide depth at the point. Swingman Reggie Jessie and JC transfer Marvis "Bootsy" Thornton will be counted on for some shooting and scoring.

Key to success: St. John's has had two consecutive successful recruiting seasons. Those players were recruited by Fran Fraschilla, though, and now must adjust to the style and system of new coach Mike Jarvis. If the players can put the whole ugly situation with Fraschilla behind them and Jarvis earns their respect early, it could have a positive impact.

Outlook: Lopez and Hamilton couldn't live up to the high expectations that accompanied their recruitment. That era is over now. So is the Fraschilla era, for whatever reason. St. John's has one of the proudest traditions in the nation. It's time the program recaptured that feeling. Back-to-back NCAA bids would be a big step in that direction. All eyes will be on Jarvis and Barkley. If Jarvis lives up to his salary and Barkley lives up to his press clippings, college basketball will come alive again in New York City.

Red Storm Data

Coach: Mike Jarvis (First year; 253-141 overall, 13 years; 3-6 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 22-10. Big East 6: 13-5/2nd. Lost to Detroit in NCAA Midwest first round.

Starters lost (3): Zendon Hamilton, C (15.4 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 47.2 3-pt%, 32.4 mpg); Felipe Lopez, G (17.6 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 1.2 spg, 34.6 mpg); Tarik Turner, G (71.4 FT%, 19.1 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (2): Tyrone Grant, F/C, 6-7/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 51.3 FG%, 21.3 mpg); Lavor Postell, F, 6-6/Jr. (9.9 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 45.2 FG%, 82.6 FT%, 1.0 spg, 29.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Ron Artest, F/G, 6-6/Soph. (11.6 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 1.6 spg, 1.1 bpg, 27.2 mpg); Collin Charles, G, 5-11/Jr. (73.0 FT%, 3.0 apg, 1.0 spg, 21.1 mpg); Chudney Gray, G, 6-3/Jr.; Reggie Jessie, G/F, 6-7/Soph. (10.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Erick Barkley, G, 6-1/Fr.; Ernest

Brown, C, 6-11/Fr.; Donald Emanuel, F, 6-8/Fr.; Anthony Glover, G, 6-6/Fr.; Albert Richardson, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Marvis "Bootsy" Thornton, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1992 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Jamaica, N.Y. **Home courts:** Alumni Hall (6,008); Madison Square Garden (19,763).

4. PITTSBURGH

Frontcourt: Isaac Hawkins surprised people last season. Now opponents will enter games understanding Hawkins is capable of dominating the boards and getting his 14 or 15 points every night. The question is

East tournament. Sophomore Attila Cosby also started every game as a freshman.

Backcourt: Rest is the only thing Vonteego Cummings needs to add to his game. Just a little rest, so he doesn't have to play 40.1 minutes per game, as he did last season. Coach Ralph Willard had little choice, and Cummings responded with the type of season that makes him a player-of-the-year candidate. But imagine how good Cummings would be if he could just catch his wind now and then. The key to that could be Kellii Taylor, whose



Postell has proven to be a capable—if not special—Big East player who has added offense to his already stellar defense. However, he and his teammates must adjust to a new coach.

whether they will find a way to stop him—or will he just get better? Bank on the latter. Hawkins emerged as one of the most intimidating and productive big men in the conference last season. Swingman Ricardo Greer, a Big East all-rookie pick, will benefit from the experience he gained last season and the confidence he got from playing well in the Big

first two seasons have been plagued by injury reports and hospital visits. He led the Big East in steals two seasons ago and Willard would love to have that weapon back full time. Jarrett Lockhart stepped up and provided some outside shooting last season, and that would be an added bonus to this rotation.

Key to success: The only thing holding the Panthers back the past three seasons has been injuries. Some say Willard should taper his practice plans so the team can stay healthy, but many of the injuries have been freak accidents nobody could prevent or predict. The talent is in place, so don't be surprised if Pitt finally makes its move.

Outlook: With five starters back and Cummings leading the way, Pitt enters the season with high hopes. Of course, Willard needs some extra help from the voodoo doctors to cast a spell and keep the injury bug away. Willard finally may be able to demonstrate his coaching ability. Hawkins is on the verge of becoming an NBA pick, and there are newcomers such as Chris Seabrooks waiting for their chance. This could be a breakout season for Pitt.

Panthers Data

Coach: Ralph Willard (49-66, 4 years; 130-108 overall, 8 years; 2-2 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 11-16. Big East 7: 6-12/T5th.
Starters lost: None.
Others lost: Kevin Leslie, F/C (transfer); Michael Shin, F (10.0 mpg; transfer).
Starters returning (5): Attila Cosby, F, 6-9/Soph. (9.3 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 50.9 FG%, 2.0 bpg, 29.5 mpg); Vontee Cummings, G, 6-5/Sr. (19.5 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 5.9 apg, 2.5 spg, 40.1 mpg); Ricardo Greer, G, 6-5/Soph. (12.4 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 72.7 FT%, 4.3 apg, 1.6 spg, 35.8 mpg); Isaac Hawkins, F, 6-8/Jr. (14.2 ppg, 9.2 rpg, 54.1 FG%, 1.2 spg, 1.7 bpg, 37.4 mpg); Jarrett Lockhart, G, 6-3/Jr. (11.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 73.8 FT%, 38.1 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 30.4 mpg).
Other returnees: Kellii Taylor, G, 6-1/Jr. (7.2 ppg, 35.7 3-pt%, 2.2 spg, 23.4 mpg); Stephen Flores, F, 6-8/So. (11.0 mpg).
Top newcomers: Jeremy Holmes, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Fred Primus, G, 6-3/Fr.; Chris Seabrooks, F, 6-9/Fr.
Last league title: 1988.
Last NCAA appearance: 1993.
Site: Pittsburgh. **Home courts:** Fitzgerald Field House (6,798); Civic Arena (17,159).

5. GEORGETOWN

Frontcourt: The Hoyas have turned out their share of fine NBA big men. The Georgetown reputation is so strong that Jahidi White was drafted by the Washington Wizards in June, even though he missed much of last season because of a broken ankle. Too bad White doesn't have a year left for the Hoyas. There are unusual questions about Georgetown's inside strength as this season begins. Center Jameel Watkins, who stepped in for White last season, returns. But it really will be up to Ruben Boumtje Boumtje to pick up the slack. He suffered a wrist injury that ended his season after six games last year, but coach John Thompson has high hopes. Forward Rhese Gibson, who had off-season surgery along with Boumtje Boumtje, also will need to contribute in the absence of Boubacar Aw.

Backcourt: For once, it appears Thompson will be able to feature a potent perimeter attack. The possibilities are endless, especially if freshman Kevin Braswell steps in and runs the show at point guard. Shernard

Long emerged as a scorer last season and should have incredible confidence heading into this season. Anthony Perry, who was considered a top-30 recruit in 1997, won't need long to dust himself off after sitting out as a non-qualifier. Mix in Trez Kilpatrick, Joseph Toumou and Daymond Jackson, and it looks like the kind of depth and talent that Thompson loves to utilize in his frenetic defensive attack.

Keys to success: If the Hoyas stay healthy and get consistent contributions from Boumtje Boumtje and Watkins up front, they could make some noise. Rebounding always has been an important part of Thompson's scheme. The backcourt is talented enough if the frontcourt does the dirty work.

Outlook: Thompson isn't going to tolerate another season like last year. Defections, unrest and defeats aren't part of his routine. But he handled the adversity with dignity last season, never pointing fingers or complaining about misfortune. The rest of the conference may have trouble containing this new-look Hoyas team. Don't be surprised if the Hoyas climb even higher in the standings. And a return to the NCAA Tournament could be the reward.

Hoyas Data

Coach: John Thompson (589-233, 26 years; 34-19 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in '84).
1997-98 record: 16-15. Big East 7: 6-12/5th. Lost to Georgia Tech in NIT second round.
Starters lost (1): Boubacar Aw, F (11.4 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 51.6 FG%, 1.0 spg, 27.4 mpg).
Others lost: Jahidi White, C (10.5 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 63.4 FG%, 1.0 spg, 2.2 bpg, 21.6 mpg).
Starters returning (4): Nat Burton, G, 6-4/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 16.0 mpg); Shernard Long, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (13.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 72.9 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 2.3 spg, 28.0 mpg); Joseph Toumou, G, 6-2/Sr. (75.0 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 21.1 mpg); Jameel Watkins, C, 6-10/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 18.2 mpg).
Other returnees: Dean Berry, G, 5-10/Sr.; Ruben Boumtje Boumtje, C, 6-11/Soph.; Rhese Gibson, F, 6-7/Jr. (3.3 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 81.3 FT%, 12.7 mpg); Daymond Jackson, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (8.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 1.4 spg, 20.3 mpg); Trez Kilpatrick, F, 6-6/Jr. (10.9 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 74.3 FT%, 1.1 spg, 23.9 mpg).
Top newcomers: Kevin Braswell, G, 6-2/Fr.; Anthony Perry, G, 6-3/Soph. (Prop 48); Willie Taylor, F, 6-5/Fr.
Last league title: 1997.
Last NCAA appearance: 1997.
Site: Washington, D.C. **Home court:** MCI Center (29,600).

6. MIAMI

Frontcourt: There's no doubt about the star attraction when Miami comes to town. Tim James was a first-team All-Big East selection last year and hopes to duplicate that performance. His high-flying style and thrilling dunks have made him an entertainment item. But it isn't all style points. James also does the dirty work Miami needs and was the conference's leading rebounder. James is the only key senior, but juniors Johnny Hemsley and Mario Bland established themselves as key contributors last season. Bland was a surprise, taking control in the low post and leading the conference in shooting percentage. Elton

Tyler also showed signs of promise while getting experience as a freshman.

Backcourt: Point guard Kevin Norris, the school's career leader in assists and steals, is gone. Some say that is bad; others take a different approach. In addition to putting up some impressive numbers and serving as a reliable 3-point threat, Norris also was known for making bad decisions in crunch time that cost Miami games. But he did run the show as Miami made only its second NCAA Tournament in school history. Coach Leonard Hamilton will pick among Vernon Jennings, Michael Simmons and Joao Paulo Coelho when it comes to picking Norris' successor. Simmons and Paulo Coelho are freshmen. Shooting guard Kevin Houston, a JC transfer, could get a chance in the backcourt, and Jennings could be used at either spot in addition to small forward.

Key to success: Finding a leader is the major concern. None of the possible candidates enters the season as a favorite, so the competition should be intense. With a trip to the NCAA Tournament finally under their belts, the four returning starters should know what it takes to be successful.

Outlook: Any team that has James is in the hunt for the upper division. If a lead guard emerges and the Hurricanes play sticky defense the way they did last season, it is possible Hamilton's team could move higher. A fifth consecutive winning season shouldn't be a problem. With young talent such as Simmons, John Salmons and Mike Byars-Dawson, Hamilton has the Hurricanes stocked for a couple of years, and a return to the NCAAs isn't out of the question.

Hurricanes Data

Coach: Leonard Hamilton (98-129, 8 years; 154-192 overall, 12 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 18-10. Big East 7: 11-7/2nd. Lost to UCLA in NCAA South first round.
Starters lost (1): Kevin Norris, G (8.0 ppg, 81.6 FT%, 4.9 apg, 2.4 spg, 30.8 mpg).
Others lost: Steve Frazier, G (5.6 ppg, 21.4 mpg); Jaime Waggoner, G; Charles Wiseman, G.
Starters returning (4): Mario Bland, C, 6-6/Jr. (11.6 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 61.0 FG%, 26.9 mpg); Johnny Hemsley, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (14.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 78.6 FT%, 29.9 mpg); Tim James, F, 6-7/Sr. (16.8 ppg, 9.4 rpg, 48.5 FG%, 1.5 spg, 1.6 bpg, 31.8 mpg); Vernon Jennings, G/F, 6-3/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 3.9 apg, 1.3 spg, 23.7 mpg).
Other returnees: Mike Byars-Dawson, G, 5-10/Soph.; Mike Curcio, G, 5-9/Sr.; Nick Donovan, C, 7-0/Sr.; Todd Manuel, G, 6-2/Soph.; Jerry Schlie, F, 6-6/Soph.; Elton Tyler, F, 6-9/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 61.3 FG%, 11.1 mpg); Dwayne Wimbley, C, 6-9/Soph.
Top newcomers: Joao Paulo Coelho, G, 6-2/Fr.; Kevin Houston, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Paul Jacobs, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); John Salmons, F, 6-7/Fr.; Michael Simmons, G, 6-1/Fr.
Last league title: None.
Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.
Site: Coral Gables, Fla. **Home court:** Miami Arena (15,388).

7. VILLANOVA

Frontcourt: If you watch Malik Allen and Rafal Bigus up front, then go away craving

more, welcome to the club; coach Steve Lappas already is a member of that fraternity. Lappas, who spent most of last season searching for a winning combination (nine players started at least five games), would like to see the two big men become more dominating. They have the size; it's a matter of desire and consistency. Put their statistics together and you would have one amazing player. But individually, each has been just routine. If the Wildcats are to improve they may need help from Simon Ogunlesi and freshman Brooks Sales. T.J. Caouette has been a steady contributor off the bench and can play either forward spot.

Backcourt: There's nothing sensational about the backcourt of John Celestand and Howard Brown, but both emerged as steady contributors last season. Celestand still has a tendency to make poor decisions, so Jermaine Medley, who started 23 games last season, will be waiting to take over at point guard. Brian Lynch can play either position and is capable of making an impact. Johnny Holley and Bobby Smith are newcomers who might be expected to do some scoring.

Key to success: Teamwork. Watching Villanova last season was painful at times. All five starters are back, and there are some talented individuals. But unless they start playing together as a unit, the Wildcats are going to plod around. Lappas needs to cure the chemistry crisis.

Outlook: There is enough talent here to help the Wildcats recall better days. There also are too many egos and attitudes involved. Based on past performance, it's hard to imagine the Wildcats climbing any higher, but maybe this is the season everything gets put in place. Villanova's top six players are back, and that should account for something. Look for Lappas to lead this team back to the postseason.

Wildcats Data

Coach: Steve Lappas (115-73, 6 years; 171-135 overall, 10 years; 2-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 12-17. Big East 6: 8-10/4th.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Joe Jackson, G; Brian Noone, G; Marvin O'Connor, G (4.7 ppg, 15.6 mpg; transferred); Zeffy Penn, F (6.2 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 45.3 FG%, 73.3 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 22.0 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Malik Allen, C, 6-10/Jr. (8.3 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 46.9 FG%, 72.5 FT%, 1.4 bpg, 24.7 mpg); Rafal Bigus, C, 7-1/Sr. (8.2 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 57.0 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 22.6 mpg); Howard Brown, F, 6-5/Sr. (13.1 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 37.0 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 1.1 spg, 33.8 mpg); John Celestand, G, 6-3/Sr. (13.2 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 72.2 FT%, 5.1 apg, 1.7 spg, 34.7 mpg); Jermaine Medley, G, 6-0/Soph. (6.2 ppg, 87.5 FT%, 22.0 mpg).

Other returnees: T.J. Caouette, F, 6-7/Jr. (4.3 ppg, 14.5 mpg); Chris Lee, F, 6-5/Sr.; Brian Lynch, G, 6-6/Jr. (8.1 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 1.2 spg, 20.3 mpg); Simon Ogunlesi, F, 6-10/Soph.

Top newcomers: Johnny Holley, F, 6-6/Fr. (RS); Brooks Sales, F, 6-10/Fr.; Bobby Smith, G, 6-2/Fr.

Last league title: 1997 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Philadelphia. **Home court:** The Pavilion (6,500), CoreStates Spectrum (18,060), CoreStates Center (19,010).

8. RUTGERS

Frontcourt: Coach Kevin Bannon showed up at his first conference media day last season chatting about the surprising progress of center Alvydas Tenys. He did start 13 games, but his statistics were nothing to write home about. With Eric Clark gone, that means Bannon must get more production out of Tenys. If Tenys doesn't come through, Bannon will turn to freshmen Eugene Dabney and Rashod Kent for help. Billy Collins and Joel Salvi are other new forwards who could contribute. Rob Hodgson is back for his senior season, and by now Scarlet Knights fans know they can expect a solid effort and leadership from him.

Backcourt: Geoff Billet is the man who makes everything go. He has bought into Bannon's new program, and his enthusiasm was a highlight of the Big East tournament, where the Scarlet Knights advanced to the semifinals. Clutch performances have given Billet, who led the team in scoring and is a solid 3-point threat, the confidence he needs to survive in a rugged conference. Swingman Jeff Greer showed enough promise to make the Big East all-rookie team (as did his brother, Ricardo Greer, at Pittsburgh last year). Earl Johnson, who can play either guard position with Billet, has been sensational and erratic at point guard. He will be pushed by JC transfer Brian Samuels.

Key to success: Four starters—each averaging in double figures—are back, and for once there is reason to hope Rutgers will not finish with a losing record. A streak of six consecutive losing seasons is about to come to an end.

Outlook: With five of his top six players back and Bannon bringing in a fine recruiting class, it's clear it's only a matter of time before Rutgers makes a splash in the Big East. Bannon should remind his players every day during the preseason of what they did at the Big East tournament. That momentum must carry over to the new season. Don't expect too much too fast, but an NIT bid would be a step in the right direction.

Scarlet Knights Data

Coach: Kevin Bannon (14-15, 1 year; 290-166 overall, 16 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 14-15. Big East 7: 6-12/T5th.

Starters lost (1): Eric Clark, C (10.9 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 53.4 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 27.5 mpg).

Others lost: Johnnie Blake, G; Sam Sanders, F (transfer/South Florida); Josh Sankes, C (transfer/Holy Cross).

Starters returning (4): Geoff Billet, G, 6-0/Sr. (13.9 ppg, 2.8 rpg, 82.6 FT%, 4.1 apg, 37.8 mpg); Jeff Greer, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (10.0 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 2.8 apg, 31.5 mpg); Rob Hodgson, F, 6-7/Sr. (13.2 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 83.5 FT%, 35.2 mpg); Earl Johnson, G, 6-0/Sr. (10.9 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 80.3 FT%, 4.2 apg, 31.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Darko Matijasevic, F, 6-8/Sr. (2.0 mpg); Alvydas Tenys, C, 6-11/Jr. (5.1 ppg, 1.9 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 15.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Billy Collins, F, 6-7/Fr.; Eugene Dabney, C/F, 6-10/Fr.; Dahntay Jones, G, 6-5/Fr.; Rashod Kent, F, 6-6/Fr.; Joel Salvi, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Brian Samuels, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1991 (Atlantic 10).

Last NCAA appearance: 1991.

Site: New Brunswick, N.J. **Home court:** Brown Athletic Center (8,500).

9. WEST VIRGINIA

Frontcourt: Marcus Goree, this is your team. That may sound good to Goree, but it can't be much comfort to coach Gale Catlett and Mountaineer fans. Nothing against Goree. He started five games last season, averaged more than 23 minutes and played a nice role on a team that reached the Sweet 16. But his surrounding cast is gone. And it's never comforting when a team's top returning scorer averaged 8.0 points. Where have you gone, Damian Owens? So, put Goree in the starting spot at power forward and move on from there. Elton Scott, who joined the program at midseason last year, likely will be the small forward. JC transfer Calvin Bowman is the only center listed on the roster. Tom Beynon could help around the basket.

Backcourt: There are plenty of candidates for these two spots, but point guard Jarrett Kears is the only one who averaged more than 10 minutes last season. Kears will battle freshman Lionel Armstead for the starting role at the point. With Greg Jones and Jarrod West departed, the Mountaineers will be searching for perimeter scoring. JC transfer Brad McMillian likely will get a shot at shooting guard. Swingman Brooks Berry could be a 3-point threat. Other perimeter candidates include Duane Lewis and Jason D'Alesio.

Key to success: A weak league schedule helps give West Virginia hope. If the JC transfers live up to expectations, the Mountaineers should avoid the basement.

Outlook: At least Catlett, Goree and Kears have the memories from last season. Any team that must replace six of its top seven scorers probably will end up dwelling on memories and hopes for next year. In addition to Owens, Jones and West, the Mountaineers also lost Adrian Pledger, Brent Solheim and Brian Lewin. There are quite a few Big East teams waiting to avenge losses in Morgantown last season. It's hard to imagine the Mountaineers reaching .500 in conference play.

Mountaineers Data

Coach: Gale Catlett (390-216, 20 years; 514-260 overall, 26 years; 7-11 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 24-9. Big East 6: 11-7/3rd. Lost to Utah in NCAA West semifinals.

Starters lost (5): Brian Lewin, C (7.6 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 1.0 spg, 24.6 mpg); Damian Owens, F (16.5 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 50.6 FG%, 3.0 apg, 3.0 spg, 29.7 mpg); Adrian Pledger, G (12.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 77.2 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 24.5 mpg); Brent Solheim, F (8.9 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 25.5 mpg); Jarrod West, G (10.6 ppg, 70.7 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 2.3 spg, 30.9 mpg).

Others lost: Greg Jones, G (11.6 ppg, 1.5 spg, 20.0 mpg); Duane Lewis, F, 6-6/Jr.; Carl Williams, G (transfer/Liberty).



There is no question Holloway can set the table for his Seton Hall teammates, but it's a matter of whether they can finish what he begins. Holloway, a third-team all-league pick, led the Big East in assists last season.

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: Brooks Berry, F, 6-6/Soph.; Tom Beynon, F, 6-9/Sr.; Jason D'Alesio, G, 6-1/Jr.; Marcus Goree, F, 6-8/Jr. (8.0 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 54.4 FG%, 1.1 bpg, 23.6 mpg); Jarett Kears, G, 6-5/Soph. (10.5 mpg); Elton Scott, F, 6-6/Sr.

Top newcomers: Lionel Armstead, G, 6-0/Fr.; Calvin Bowman, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Paul Denman, F, 6-8/Fr.; Brad McMillian, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Chris Moss, F, 6-8/Fr.; John Oliver, F, 6-9/Fr.; Jackie Rogers, F, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1989 (Atlantic 10).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Morgantown, W.Va. **Home court:** WVU Coliseum (14,000).

10. SETON HALL

Frontcourt: Tommy Amaker's staff came up short in its quest for inside help during the recruiting season. Forward Donnell Williams and center Jacky Kaba certainly don't qualify as irreplaceable, but they will be missed

because of their experience and, in Williams' case, 3-point shooting. Duane Jordan finished the season strong and returns. But Manga Charles and Damian Dawkins, two 6-10 freshmen, can be viewed only as players to be plugged in for Kaba. They don't appear to offer significant improvement. Forwards Ramon Cespedes and Reggie Garrett each made two starts last season. It's going to take a group effort for the Pirates to make much of an impact up front. Sound familiar?

Backcourt: Once again, everything begins with point guard Shaheen Holloway. He earned third team all-conference honors last season while leading the Big East in assists. There's no question he can set the table for his teammates. On this team, it's a matter of whether they can finish what he begins. Holloway went into a funk over a

shooting slump last season and his game suffered. The pressure will be even more intense now that shooting guard Levell Sanders is gone. Rimas Kaukenas, who made a surprising contribution last season, returns. But the Pirates are hoping Gary Saunders, a transfer from Georgia Tech, can relieve some of the attention defenses will place on Holloway.

Key to success: The Pirates must replace the scoring punch of Sanders and Williams. They combined for 30 points a game last season for an up-and-down team. If Saunders can produce in his new role, it will make a big difference.

Outlook: Expectations were low for Seton Hall last season, but Amaker led the Pirates to a .500 conference season and a trip to the NIT. That was a major victory for the program and illustrated that Amaker learned a thing or two about the game during his days at Duke. If Holloway can stay sharp mentally and someone emerges in the frontcourt, the Pirates could pull a few more upsets this season. But postseason play seems a stretch.

Pirates Data

Coach: Tommy Amaker (15-15, 1 year). **1997-98 record:** 15-15, Big East 7: 9-9/3rd. Lost to Georgia Tech in NIT first round.

Starters lost (2): Levell Sanders, G (15.6 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 83.5 FT%, 35.4 3-pt%, 1.7 spg, 36.2 mpg); Donnell Williams, F (14.5 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 75.4 FT%, 31.1 mpg).

Others lost: Jacky Kaba, C (4.3 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 21.3 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Shaheen Holloway, G, 5-10/Jr. (15.0 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 6.5 apg, 2.1 spg, 36.7 mpg); Duane

Jordan, F, 6-6/Sr. (6.5 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 70.6 FT%, 26.5 mpg); Rimas Kaukenas, G, 6-4/Jr. (8.7 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 75.3 FT%, 1.3 spg, 27.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Ramon Cespedes, F, 6-7/Soph. (9.3 mpg); Reggie Garrett, F, 6-6/Soph. (47.4 FG%, 71.4 FT%, 14.0 mpg); John Johnson, G, 6-2/Sr.; Chuck Moore, G, 6-2/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 13.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Manga Charles, F, 6-10/Fr.; Damian Dawkins, C, 6-10/Fr.; Darius Lane, G, 6-4/Fr.; Gary Saunders, G, 6-5/Jr. (transfer/Georgia Tech); Ty Shine, G, 6-0/Fr.

Last league title: 1993.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: South Orange, N.J. **Home courts:** Continental Airlines Arena (20,029); Walsh Gym (3,200).

11. PROVIDENCE

Frontcourt: Name the tallest player on the Providence roster. Did you say Llewellyn Cole? Or Ben Perkins? Both are 6-7. That

qualifies as the height on coach Tim Welsh's team. That would seem to translate into trouble. All last season, former coach Pete Gillen vowed to get some help for Jamel Thomas. The recruits didn't come. Perhaps that's one reason Gillen left for Virginia. Thomas, a true star in this league who quietly goes about his business, is back for his senior season. And once again the Friars will ask him to do everything except sell concessions. Perkins, Justin Farley and Erron Maxey had their shining moments last season. But with so many mid-size players running around, it would be great if just one full-size model came along to drive the Friars inside.

Backcourt: Welsh will have some interesting options in the backcourt. There isn't one player who stands out, but with Kendrick Moore, Corey Wright and John Linehan returning, there is a decent rotation. Moore is capable of bigger and better numbers than he produced last season. He can play either position, and Wright and Linehan should benefit from the knowledge of new assistant King Rice, a former North Carolina point guard. Waiting for their first chances in the spotlight are defensive specialist Jamaal Camah and freshman shooter Sean Connolly.

Key to success: A new attitude. This team is athletic and can run, but it isn't blessed with talent or size. An infusion of Welsh's enthusiasm might be what this team needs. It will be up to the seniors, especially Thomas and Moore, to set a positive tone in practice.

Outlook: It's not going to be easy. Welsh may be happy to be in the Big East, but there will be days when he longs to return to Iona. The best thing Welsh can do is install his system, hope the players embrace it and wait for the recruits to take notice. Thomas deserves a winning senior season, but that will be asking a lot.

Friars Data

Coach: Tim Welsh (First year; 70-22 overall, 3 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-16 Big East 7: 7-11/4th.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Mark Adams, G; Waleed Driscoll, F; (transfer); T.J. McKenzie, C (transfer/Rice).

Starters returning (5): Justin Farley, F, 6-6/Sr. (9.5 ppg, 49.5 FG%, 35.5 3-pt%, 22.0 mpg); John Linehan, G, 5-9/Soph. (5.6 ppg, 90.7 FT%, 35.5 3-pt%, 1.7 spg, 24.7 mpg); Erron Maxey, C, 6-6/Soph. (7.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 55.6 FG%, 19.1 mpg); Kendrick Moore, G, 6-3/180, Sr. (9.2 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 81.1 FT%, 3.2 apg, 30.2 mpg); Jamel Thomas, F, 6-6/Sr. (18.5 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 78.0 FT%, 1.5 spg, 35.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Llewellyn Cole, F, 6-7/Jr. (6.9 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 48.6 FG%, 23.8 mpg); Ben Perkins, F, 6-7/Soph. (6.5 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 20.0 mpg); Corey Wright, G, 5-8/Sr. (1.9 spg, 23.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jamaal Camah, G, 6-4/Soph. (Prop 48); Sean Connolly, G, 6-4/Fr.; Rahim Johnson, F, 6-6/Fr.

Last league title: 1994.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Providence, R.I. **Home court:** Providence Civic Center (12,993).

12. NOTRE DAME

Frontcourt: The best news Notre Dame received during the spring and summer months came at the Capital Classic in Washington D.C., where Irish recruit Troy Murphy picked up MVP honors on the national squad. Murphy, who averaged 33 points at Delbarton High School in Morristown, N.J., is the player who eventually may be able to replace Pat Garrity. In fact, there are predictions Murphy will emerge as more of an inside force than Garrity ever was. But while Murphy takes time to develop, center Phil Hickey will be asked to pick up the slack for Garrity and Derek Manner, who also graduated. Leviticus Williamson and Hans Rasmussen also will be expected to produce more.

Backcourt: No one put more punch in Notre Dame's attack last season than guard Keith Friel. His 3-point barrage gave the Irish hope for an NCAA bid. And when he was hurt, the Irish fell into a deep slump. Friel's decision to transfer to Virginia was a crushing blow. Martin Ingelsby and Antoni Wyche will be asked to carry the bulk of the backcourt load. Ingelsby was an all-rookie selection last season and Wyche averaged almost 10 points a game. That isn't intimidating, but it is someplace for coach John MacLeod to start. Jimmy Dillon, the backup point guard last season, is the most experienced reserve.

Key to success: MacLeod has done a decent job recruiting and the youngsters must mature quickly. If recruits Murphy, David Graves and Harold Swanagan improve rapidly, it will be a bonus.

Outlook: This season is going to be a struggle for the Irish. So much revolved around Garrity that his remaining teammates are going to have a hard adjustment. And without Friel, the Irish have lost an explosive scoring threat. Those seven Big East victories last season are going to look mighty good compared to this season.

Fighting Irish Data

Coach: John MacLeod (92-108, 7 years; 182-177 overall, 13 years).

1997-98 record: 13-14. Big East 6: 7-11/5th.

Starters lost (2): Pat Garrity, F (23.2 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 75.0 FT%, 37.0 3-pt%, 35.4 mpg); Derek Manner, F (6.1 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 1.6 spg, 26.3 mpg).

Others lost: Keith Friel, G (8.9 ppg, 7.1 FT%, 46.4 3-pt%, 17.9 mpg; transfer/Virginia).

Starters returning (3): Phil Hickey, C, 6-10/Sr. (10.7 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 49.6 FG%, 1.1 bpg, 29.0 mpg); Martin Ingelsby, G, 5-11/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 39.8 3-pt%, 5.5 apg, 1.5 spg, 32.5 mpg); Antoni Wyche, G, 6-4/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 82.8 FT%, 1.1 spg, 27.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Jimmy Dillon, G, 6-1/Jr. (10.1 mpg); Peter Okwalinga, F, 6-8/Soph.; Todd Palmer, F, 6-7/Jr.; Hans Rasmussen, F, 6-9/Soph. (9.5 mpg); Leviticus Williamson, F, 6-6/Soph.

Top newcomers: David Graves, F, 6-6/Fr.; Troy Murphy, F, 6-10/Fr.; Harold Swanagan, F, 6-8/Fr.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1990.

Site: South Bend, Ind. **Home court:** Joyce Center (11,418).

13. BOSTON COLLEGE

Frontcourt: Coach Al Skinner had made his preseason plans. Many of them centered on Kostas Maglos. Then in late July, Maglos called with the bad news. He had accepted an offer to play professionally in Greece. So much for advance planning. Maglos, a 6-10 senior, would have been the centerpiece of a young team craving leadership. Now the Eagles have reached rock bottom and Skinner has to replace the 13 points and seven rebounds Maglos accounted for each game last season. Sophomore forward Jonathan Beerbohm becomes the frontcourt player with the most experience. Recruits Osei Millar, Kenny Walls and Brian Ross will get a long look right away.

Backcourt: Sophomore Kenny Harley becomes the top returning scorer after the defection of Maglos. Harley broke into the starting lineup last season and averaged 4.5 points. That doesn't give Skinner great reason for confidence. With the graduation of Antonio Granger and Duane Woodward, Skinner will be searching for anyone to contribute. Dwayne Pina returns. Spring signee Willie Deane likely will back up Pina at the point. Freshman Clinton Sims will battle Harley at shooting guard.

Key to success: Perseverance. The Eagles face a season full of setbacks. Things weren't too promising with Maglos. Now the goal might be to avoid going winless in conference play.

Outlook: Skinner now faces one of the biggest rebuilding chores in conference history. Last season, Skinner could at least implore his players to excel for the sake of seniors Mickey Curley, Granger and Woodward. The Eagles responded well and flirted with a post-season bid. This season, the only flirting will be with disaster.

Eagles Data

Coach: Al Skinner (15-16, 1 year; 153-142 overall, 10 years; 1-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-16. Big East 6: 6-12/6th.

Starters lost (4): Mickey Curley, C (11.0 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 31.9 mpg); Antonio Granger, F (17.9 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 45.3 FG%, 77.6 FT%, 35.4 mpg); Kostas Maglos, F (13.3 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 59.1 FG%, 29.6 mpg; signed to play in Greece); Duane Woodward, G (15.6 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 74.2 FT%, 5.1 apg, 2.1 spg, 36.2 mpg).

Others lost: Damien Foster, G; Javier Rodriguez, G (4.5 ppg, 1.0 spg, 20.0 mpg).

Starters returning (1): Kenny Harley, G, 6-4/Soph. (4.5 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 77.1 FT%, 1.0 spg, 21.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Julian Bah, F, 6-6/Soph.; Jonathan Beerbohm, F, 6-7/Soph. (15.8 mpg); Jim Boland, F, 6-5/Jr.; Nicolas Dunn, G, 6-3/Soph.; Dwayne Pina, G, 5-10/Soph. (75.0 FT%, 17.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Michael Cotton, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (transfer/Oklahoma); Willie Deane, G, 6-1/Fr.; Osei Miller, F, 6-8/Fr.; Brian Ross, F, 6-8/Fr.; Clinton Sims, G/F, 6-3/Fr.; Kenny Walls, G/F, 6-5/Fr.

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Chestnut Hill, Mass. **Home court:** Silvio O. Conte Forum (8,606).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: SMU. The Mustangs came within a Keith Van Horn tip in the final fraction of a second of upsetting Utah in the WAC Tournament two years ago. They had their NCAA/NIT bubble burst late last season. Thus having knocked on the door, Mike Dement's team might just have the talent to take the next logical step through it this time.

Descending: UTEP. Stung with recruiting limitations as penalties for NCAA violations, the Miners have been treading water rather than moving forward. A seven-game losing streak at the end of last season bodes ill for this season.

Biggest sneakers to fill: Utah center Michael Doleac's. For the second successive season, it's a Utah frontcourt player. Last year, it was forward Keith Van Horn. This year, it's Doleac, who wasn't fancy, just effective. He also had a go-to presence inside that made his teammates all the more dangerous.

Most underrated player: SMU guard Stephen Woods. With all the good backcourt players in the league, including a tall one on his own team (Jeryl Sasser), Woods sometimes gets lost in the shuffle. But he does what's asked and does it well.

Most overrated player: UNLV guard Edwin "Greedy" Daniels. Heralded as a top-50 recruit, Daniels looked like just another player much of his freshman year.

Coach on the hot seat: San Diego State's Fred Trenkle. He has a 1-year-old arena with 12,400 seats that the athletic department, under pressure from the academic side to stop its fiscal bleeding, wants to see filled. He has a team with eight freshmen, three of them local stars who will join Trenkle under the microscope. It's a situation that can get a coach canonized or crucified.

Best bets: Fresno State won't get through the year without some players showing up on a police blotter. ... TCU coach Billy Tubbs won't get through the year without ticking off somebody over running up a score. ... Despite efforts for improvement, officiating will remain well below the quality level it should for a conference this good. And the league offices will hear about it repeatedly from the high-quality group of coaches.

Odds and ends: The underlying theme of the season will be rivalries between the teams that have announced their intentions to leave and form their own league—BYU, Utah, San Diego State, New Mexico, Colorado State, UNLV, Wyoming and Air Force—and those staying in the WAC. The bolters will miss having a Hawaii trip to point out to potential recruits but won't miss having to play the Rainbows in Honolulu. ... This year's schedule consists of 14 games for each team within its own division, but no crossover games. ... Coach Jerry Tarkanian contends Fresno State's vigorous drug testing program and strict policies regarding positives for marijuana in part explain the large number of suspensions the past two years. Random tests are conducted weekly, and any marijuana positive brings a 3-4 week suspension for rehabilitation and counseling. It's Tarkanian's opinion that if high-profile programs in other places had similar policies, incidents of suspensions would be higher.

—HANK WESCH



ED NESSEN / TSN

Prince Fowler makes TCU's high-powered offense go. Expect the Frogs' propensity to put up big-margin wins to rankle a few coaches.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. TCU (F/C Marquise Gainous). Gainous, a JC transfer, headlines a class of 10 newcomers. Gainous, one of six JC transfers signed by Billy Tubbs and his staff, should provide immediate frontcourt help for the Horned Frogs. JC import Vladimir Jaksic also will help in the frontcourt, and freshman Michael McCausey will get a chance to start at off-guard.
 2. New Mexico (G Dontay Hicks).
 3. UNLV (F Shawn Marion).
 4. Utah (G Jeremy Killion).
 5. Tulsa (C Brandon Kurtz).
 6. SMU (F DeWayne Floyd).
 7. Hawaii (F Marquette Alexander).
 8. San Diego State (F Vincent Okotie).
 9. BYU (F Silester Rivers).
 10. Wyoming (G Chris McMillian).
 11. Fresno State (F Andrea Bona).
 12. UTEP (G Winfred McRae).
 13. Colorado State (G/F Tony Trimble).
 14. Rice (G Keenan Holmes).
 15. San Jose State (G Ben Sanders).
- (NOTE: Air Force does not release list of signees.)

BY STEVE CARP
Las Vegas Sun
AND HANK WESCH
San Diego Union-Tribune

PREDICTIONS

MOUNTAIN

1. UNLV
2. Tulsa
3. TCU
4. SMU
5. Wyoming
6. Colorado St.
7. Rice
8. Air Force

PACIFIC

1. New Mexico
2. Utah
3. Fresno St.
4. Hawaii
5. BYU
6. UTEP
7. San Diego St.
8. San Jose St.

ALL-WAC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	SHAWN MARION, UNLV	6-7/215	Jr.
F	LEE NAILON, TCU	6-9/235	Sr.
C	KENNY THOMAS, New Mexico	6-8/255	Sr.
G	LAMONT LONG, New Mexico	6-4/190	Jr.
G	ANDRE MILLER, Utah	6-2/205	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	HANNO MOTTOLA, Utah	6-10/230	Jr.
F	MICHAEL RUFFIN, Tulsa	6-8/235	Sr.
F	DAMION WALKER, New Mexico	6-7/225	Jr.
G	CHRIS HERREN, Fresno State	6-3/185	Sr.
G	JERYL SASSER, SMU	6-6/200	Soph.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

ANDRE MILLER, G, Utah



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

SHAWN MARION, F, UNLV

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter: Brian Keefe, UNLV.
Best rebounder: Michael Ruffin, Tulsa.
Best playmaker: Andre Miller, Utah.
Best defender: Andre Miller, Utah.
Best leaper: Erin Galloway, Hawaii.
Most versatile: Eric Coley, Tulsa.
Most flamboyant: Chris Herren, Fresno State.
Best NBA prospect: Andre Miller, Utah.



MOUNTAIN 1. UNLV

Frontcourt: Coach Bill Bayno demands versatility from his players, and just about everyone who plays up front can play more than one spot. Kevin Simmons' ability to create shots for himself while being able to guard beefier people makes him a valuable power forward. He also can play small forward and is a good perimeter shooter. JC sensation Shawn Marion, the last player cut from the gold medal-winning U.S. Goodwill Games team, will be the starting small forward. A quick leaper who has an explosive first step, Marion attacks the basket, and people who watch him say he has a lot of Scottie Pippen in him. The center position is solid, as Kaspars Kambala and Issiah Epps will share time. Their games are different; Kambala is a great offensive force inside, and Epps' specialty is defense and blocking shots. These four will see the majority of the frontcourt minutes. But Bayno has found time for Donovan Stewart and freshman Chris Richardson. Both are strong rebounders and can score inside.

Backcourt: He has his critics, to be sure, but point guard Mark Dickel merely shrugs off the swipes and does what is necessary to win. His outside shooting improved as the season went on, and his confidence grew when Bayno stuck with him at the point. He responded by helping deliver the Rebels the WAC tournament title and a trip to the NAAs. Brian Keefe came alive down the stretch after shaking off 18 months of inactivity after a transfer. Keefe is the best perimeter shooter on the team and brings some leadership qualities that come only with experience. Greedy Daniels, a highly touted freshman who struggled last year, will be the third cog in a three-man rotation, splitting time at the guard spots. Daniels must become more consistent; his erratic play was a source of frustration for the coaches and fans alike last year. Freshman Desmond Herod was a scoring sensation in New York, but he'll have a hard time cracking the lineup for the same reason Richardson may not see the court much: There are only so many minutes.

Key to success: Two consecutive 20-win seasons coupled with two postseason appearances have brought the excitement back to the Thomas & Mack Center. But until it beat Utah and New Mexico in the WAC tourney, UNLV didn't have a win over a team ranked in the top 50 last season. The Rebels must start picking up "Ws" over teams that aren't called Wofford, Chicago State or UC Irvine. Kansas, Cincinnati, UCLA, Georgetown and Oklahoma State are on the schedule this year. Wins over that caliber of competition will be an indicator the program is back to where it should be.

Outlook: If Marion delivers as expected and the veterans play the way they did over the final two weeks of last season, this team stands a good chance of getting back to the NAAs. The talent is there, and UNLV benefits from being in the weaker of the WAC's two divisions. The components are in place for an excellent season. It's just a matter of learning from past mistakes and moving forward.

Rebels Data

Coach: Bill Bayno (52-39, 3 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-13. WAC: 7-7/5th Mountain Division. Lost to Princeton in NCAA East first round.
Starters lost (1): Tyrone Nesby, F (15.8 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 70.9 FT%, 1.3 spg, 32.7 mpg).
Others lost: Corky Ausborne, G (6.5 ppg, 35.0 3-pt%, 23.6 mpg); Keon Clark, C (14.8 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 54.8 FG%, 50.0 3-pt%, 2.6 bpg, 32.1 mpg); Tyrell Jamerson, G.
Starters returning (4): Mark Dickel, G, 6-11/Jr. (5.8 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 5.5 apg, 30.3 mpg); Kaspars Kambala, C/F, 6-9/Soph. (11.6 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 52.1 FG%, 72.1 FT%, 24.7 mpg); Brian Keefe, G, 6-4/Sr. (7.7 ppg, 41.7 3-pt%, 21.9 mpg); Kevin Simmons, F, 6-8/Sr. (11.5 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 71.8 3-pt%, 38.5 3-pt%, 27.1 mpg).
Other returnees: Greedy Daniels, G, 6-0/Soph. (6.7 ppg, 1.7 spg, 22.1 mpg); Issiah Epps, C, 6-10/Jr. (4.1 rpg, 1.4 bpg, 15.7 mpg); Donovan Stewart, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (5.4 ppg, 47.7 FG%, 17.8 mpg).
Top newcomers: Desmond Herod, G, 6-5/Fr.; Keith Long, G, 6-0/Fr. (RS); Shawn Marion, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Chris Richardson, F, 6-7/Fr.; Matt Siebrandt, F, 6-7/Fr.
Last league title: 1992.
Last didn't make NCAA field: 1997.
Site: Las Vegas. **Home court:** Thomas & Mack Center (18,500).

2. TULSA

Frontcourt: Michael Ruffin is as good as it gets. He's an offensive force inside. He's a great defender. He's a leader. Small forward Eric Coley is a great defender and can stick the outside shot, which forces opponents to play him honest. Plus, his athleticism puts pressure on opposing teams. Center Zac Bennett also is a scoring threat inside. With that returning trio, it leaves little room for anyone else. John Cornwell can give Ruffin a breather and Jay Spurlock spells Bennett. But if anyone's going to get minutes other than the Big Three, it'll probably be Brandon Kurtz, the California junior college player of the year. He's a big body who scores, boards and blocks shots. Somehow, coach Bill Self will find Kurtz some time.

Backcourt: Shawn Williams returns at the point, and his role is simple: Get the ball to Ruffin and Co. up front. No one's asking him to score a lot. Besides, he has Jonnie Gendron alongside him to do that. Gendron lost his starting job after spraining his ankle midway through the season, but as long as he's healthy, he will be on the floor launching "3s" to take pressure off Ruffin and Coley. Their backups are likely to be newcomers—JV transfer Tony Heard and freshman Greg Harrington. Expect Coley to see some time at off-guard.

Key to success: Tulsa was involved in a lot of close games last year, several of which the Golden Hurricane lost. Ultimately, it cost Self's team an NCAA berth. Part of it may be the team's free-throw shooting. Tulsa hit only 68 percent from the stripe, and seven of its 12 losses were by less than five points. It needs to win some of those this season if it hopes to get back to the postseason. Ruffin will do his share, but Coley may have to pick up his numbers in the wake of leading scorer Rod Thompson's departure. Ditto Gendron, who battled injuries all year. Tulsa finished strong last year, winning seven of its final 10. That's a positive that needs to continue.

Outlook: This is a veteran team, so there shouldn't be too many surprises. Self did a nice job in his first year, and now that he has had a spin around the WAC, he should be better prepared for the league's idiosyncracies, namely the brutal travel. Tulsa doesn't play Utah or New Mexico this year. That might be enough to get the Golden Hurricane to 20

wins and a spot in the postseason.

Golden Hurricane Data

Coach: Bill Self (19-12, 1 year; 74-66 overall, 5 years).
1997-98 record: 19-12. WAC: 9-5/3rd Pacific Division.
Starters lost (1): Rod Thompson, G (15.0 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 80.5 FT%, 3.8 apg, 1.3 spg, 34.9 mpg).
Others lost: J.R. Cunningham, C (6.8 ppg, 88.5 FT%, 19.8 mpg).
Starters returning (4): Zac Bennett, C, 6-9/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 53.0 FG%, 25.5 mpg); Eric Coley, F, 6-5/Jr. (10.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 48.7 FG%, 2.0 spg, 1.4 bpg, 31.0 mpg); Michael Ruffin, F, 6-8/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 9.5 rpg, 50.2 FG%, 1.2 spg, 2.5 bpg, 33.2 mpg); Shawn Williams, G, 5-10/Sr. (5.2 ppg, 86.2 FT%, 40.6 3-pt%, 16.6 mpg).
Other returnees: John Cornwell, F, 6-9/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 50.6 FG%, 75.0 FT%, 10.6 mpg); Jonnie Gendron, G, 6-3/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 78.4 FT%, 1.1 spg, 21.2 mpg); Marcus Hill, G, 6-5/Soph. (5.2 ppg, 37.1 3-pt%, 14.6 mpg); Jay Spurlock, C, 6-10/Soph.
Top newcomers: Greg Harrington, G, 6-2/Fr.; Tony Heard, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Kevin Johnson, F, 6-8/Fr.; Brandon Kurtz, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); DeAngelo McDaniel, F, 6-10/Fr.
Last league title: 1995 (MVC). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997.
Site: Tulsa, Okla. **Home court:** Reynolds Center (8,300).

3. TCU

Frontcourt: That whooshing sound you heard through the Metroplex was Billy Tubbs' huge sigh of relief when he learned that Lee Nailon had reconsidered his decision to go pro and decided to return to TCU for his senior season. The WAC scoring champion obviously is the key to any success the Horned Frogs have this year. He will receive extra attention this time around as teams will be prepared for the attacking, strongarm style that makes him virtually impossible to stop in the paint. As for who teams up with Nailon, the likely candidate is JC transfer Marquise Gainous; he is one of the bright spots in a 10-man recruiting class, along with Shannon Long. Another JC import, Vladimir Jaksic, also will get to play alongside Nailon. Scott Gradney saw regular minutes as a reserve last season, and the same should hold true this year.

Backcourt: Tubbs' decision to hand the reins to Prince Fowler paid off as the one-time Oklahoma Sooner got the Horned Frogs' high-octane offense into gear, pushing the ball at every opportunity and making sure the stars got their full complement of shots. If Fowler needs a break, TCU will keep things in the family by going to Fowler's cousin, Thomas McTyer. More important may be who replaces Mike Jones as Fowler's running mate. It'll probably be freshman Michael Causey, a deadly long-range shooter. When TCU is running and shooting "3s", the Frogs are at their best.

Keys to success: Having lost so many key performers, how quickly can Tubbs get the newcomers to fit into his system? It may be fun to play, but it's not easy to learn. In addition, he knows teams are going to come up with all sorts of gimmicks to stop Nailon. So does he take a "to heck with them" attitude and not change anything? Or does he make some adjustments to Nailon's game that could impact his play? TCU's ultimate success could be determined by how well it fares against Tulsa and UNLV. Last year, TCU swept Tulsa in two nail-biters, and it helped get the Horned Frogs to the NAAs. Two years ago, TCU got swept by Vegas and it ultimately cost it an NCAA bid, putting Tubbs' team in the NIT.

Outlook: Even though Nailon is back, there were several key losses, and Tubbs has to

count on several unknown factors for his team to come close to matching last year's 27-6 record, which included the first undefeated conference season in WAC history. And when you're recruiting mostly JC players, they need time to adjust to playing Division I basketball. Look for TCU to be strong in the second half of the season, especially at home. The late momentum should be enough to get the team back to the postseason. But if Nailon or Fowler go down for any length of time with an injury, the Frogs are in trouble.

Horned Frogs Data

Coach: Billy Tubbs (80-45, 4 years; 519-245 overall, 24 years; 18-12 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 27-6. WAC: 14-0/1st Pacific Division. Lost to Florida State in NCAA Midwest first round.
Starters lost (3): Dennis Davis, F (7.6 ppg, 9.8 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 25.2 mpg); Malcolm Johnson, F (18.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 45.8 FG%, 78.3 FT%, 37.0 3-pt%, 2.1 spg, 33.1 mpg); Mike Jones, G (21.3 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 48.0 FG%, 80.3 FT%, 37.8 3-pt%, 5.5 apg, 2.9 spg, 36.8 mpg).
Others lost: James Penny, F (10.5 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 73.5 FT%, 1.1 spg, 1.1 bpg, 20.2 mpg).
Starters returning (2): Prince Fowler, G, 5-11/Sr. (8.2 ppg, 72.2 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 6.1 apg, 1.3 spg, 34.3 mpg); Lee Nailon, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (24.9 ppg, 8.9 rpg, 55.4 FG%, 74.5 FT%, 1.0 bpg, 1.7 spg, 33.3 mpg).
Other returnees: Ryan Carroll, G, 6-4/Soph. (51.9 FG%, 90.0 FT%, 10.9 mpg); Scott Gradney, F, 6-8/Sr. (4.4 ppg, 52.8 FG%, 75.9 FT%, 50.0 3-pt%, 10.1 mpg); Thomas McTyer, G, 5-10/Soph.
Top newcomers: Brian Brookhart, C, 6-10/Fr.; Michael Causey, G, 6-2/Fr.; Marquise Gainsou, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Brandon Gilbert, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Vladimir Jaksic, F, 6-7/Soph. (JC); Shannon Long, G/F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Lee Moon, G, 6-1/Fr. (RS/broken ankle); Deral Wilson, G, 6-6/Jr. (JC).
Last league title: 1998 (WAC Pacific).
Last NCAA appearance: 1998.
Site: Fort Worth, Texas. **Home court:** Daniel-Meyer Coliseum (7,166).

4. SMU

Frontcourt: There are lots of questions. The Mustangs lost star Jay Poerner, leaving a huge hole in the middle. Filling it will be coach Mike Dement's biggest challenge, and he's banking on Josh Ihde, who didn't play much last year, along with four freshmen. Good luck. Ihde will play power forward, and newcomers Jon Forinash and Nigel Smith will battle at center. The other freshmen, DeWayne Floyd and Michael Niemi, are more power forwards than small forwards, which means SMU has to get some scoring from somewhere other than the backcourt. Maybe swingman Willie Davis will be used more at small forward instead of off-guard. But Dement likely will stick to his three-guard, two-forward alignment.

Backcourt: SMU may have the best tandem in the WAC in point guard Stephen Woods and '97-98 freshman sensation Jeryl Sasser. They're skilled, athletic and exciting. Woods can beat you on the drive or by shooting the standup 3-point-er. Sasser posts up smaller defenders, can blow by bigger guards and scores inside and out. He was great as a freshman, so imagine how good he'll be with a year of experience. Davis, who was used more in the backcourt, came on late in the season. He takes the pressure off his backcourt mates and is an important option in the SMU attack. He, too, should benefit from a year of experience, as will Chad Elsey, the third of SMU's trio of freshman guards. Elsey was the team's fifth-leading scorer, and had there been no Sasser, he would have been the talk of the WAC.

Keys to success: With so much depth in the backcourt, Dement will be asking Woods,

Sasser, Davis and Elsey to carry much of the load until the big guys feel they can contribute. Normally, that would be a lot to ask. But all four have delivered in the past and the added experience will help. But can SMU hold its own on the glass against bigger opponents? And what happens on those nights when the shots don't drop? The backcourt can't be expected to do it all. Someone up front must step up.

Outlook: Dement is one of the rising stars in college coaching. He may have a .500 record at SMU, but if you saw where he started a couple of years ago—the WAC basement—you would appreciate the job he has done. If he had Poerner this year, Dement wouldn't be challenging for the top spot. But he doesn't, and with so many questions up front, it's hard to see SMU overtaking the top three—UNLV, Tulsa and TCU. That's not to say the Mustangs can't beat any of those teams on a given night. But in the overall scheme of things, it's a daunting task. If SMU can repeat last year's 18-10 mark, Dement will have done a great job.

Mustangs Data

Coach: Mike Dement (42-42, 3 years; 164-165 overall, 12 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 18-10. WAC: 6-8/5th Pacific Division.
Starters lost (2): Bobby Dimson, F (9.8 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 1.4 spg, 1.1 bpg, 28.4 mpg); Jay Poerner, F/C (16.3 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 45.8 FG%, 75.0 FT%, 35.2 3-pt%, 31.9 mpg).
Others lost: Matt Fitzsimmons, G; Mark Grafenreed, F; Allen Krist, F (3.6 rpg, 16.1 mpg).
Starters returning (3): Willie Davis, G/F, 6-6/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 19.9 mpg); Jeryl Sasser, G, 6-6/Soph. (15.0 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 71.8 FT%, 3.7 apg, 1.5 spg, 33.4 mpg); Stephen Woods, G, 6-0/Jr. (13.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 80.8 FT%, 41.8 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 33.4 mpg).
Other returnees: Anthony Anderson, G, 6-3/Jr.; Copley Broer, F, 6-7/Jr.; Chad Elsey, G, 6-7/Soph. (8.2 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 24.4 mpg); Josh Ihde, F, 6-8/Sr.; Tom Nabity, G, 5-10/Jr.
Top newcomers: Renaldo Bratton, G, 6-0/Soph.; DeWayne Floyd, F, 6-8/Fr.; Jon Forinash, C, 6-11/Fr.; Damon Hancock, G, 6-3/Fr.; Michael Niemi, F, 6-8/Fr.; Nigel Smith, C, 6-10/Fr.
Last league title: 1993 (SWC).
Last NCAA appearance: 1993.
Site: Dallas. **Home court:** Moody Coliseum (8,998).

5. WYOMING

Frontcourt: There's not a lot of experience, and that's especially noticeable up front. Starters Jeron Roberts and Jeff Allen are gone. The returnees—Justin French and Ugo Udezue—made steady contributions last season, but they weren't first-option players. Nor was small forward Bradley Mann, who at times got hot off the bench. The challenge for the trio will be to step up. They'll also be asked to play at a quicker tempo under new coach Steve McClain than predecessor Larry Shyatt. French has two years under his belt and should be able to improve his numbers. Mann will get more shots as he gets more minutes. But he'll also receive more attention from the opposition. How he handles it will be a barometer of how capable Wyoming is of maintaining its success of a year ago. LeDarion Jones, who redshirted last year after transferring from Clemson, may pick up some of the rebounding slack. Or perhaps freshmen John Pettersson, Jimmy White and Josh Davis can give McClain something.

Backcourt: Gregg Sawyer was one of the WAC's most underrated players, and he's gone. So it means Andy Young, the other starter from a year ago, has to carry most of the load. Tenacious and scrappy, Young will be

asked to increase his production with Sawyer and Roberts gone. Though he didn't play a lot last year, off-guard Brett McFall could help. He has a good stroke, and McClain likely will lean on McFall for some offense. Anthony Blakes supposedly is over the ankle problems that forced him to the sideline last year, and he likely will get a chance to show what he can do. So will point guard Chris McMillian, who put up big numbers in high school. But Sawyer was the team's second-leading scorer behind Roberts, and someone needs to emerge from the pack to pick up the slack.

Keys to success: How will the team respond to its third coach in as many years? More important, how will it respond to the third style of play in as many years? Under Joby Wright, the Cowboys looked to run. Under Shyatt, they walked and relied on defense. Enter McClain, who was an assistant to Billy Tubbs at TCU. And Tubbs doesn't walk anywhere. So McClain is going to try to go up-tempo with a core group of eight returnees that didn't run. McClain may find himself making adjustments throughout the season as his players try to fit their games to his style. The other concern is who replaces Roberts and Sawyer. Perhaps it will fall to four or five people.

Outlook: Give Shyatt credit. He saw what he had, changed the scheme 180 degrees and got the Cowboys into the NIT. Now there is more change. Will lightning strike twice in Laramie? It's not likely. But it is a long season, and once McClain gets the pieces to fit properly, Wyoming could be a dangerous opponent.

Cowboys Data

Coach: Steve McClain (first year).
1997-98 record: 19-9. WAC: 9-5/3rd Mountain Division. Lost to Gonzaga in NIT first round.
Starters lost (3): Jeff Allen, C (4.8 rpg, 45.7 FG%, 20.1 mpg); Jeron Roberts, F (19.0 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 80.0 FT%, 35.8 mpg); Gregg Sawyer, G (14.4 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 74.0 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 33.8 mpg).
Others lost: Derek Washington, C.
Starters returning (2): Justin French, F, 6-6/Jr. (6.1 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 76.8 FT%, 27.1 mpg); Andy Young, G, 6-0/Jr. (4.9 ppg, 82.1 FT%, 26.0 mpg).
Other returnees: Antone Lostetter, F, 6-8/Jr. (9.6 mpg); Bradley Mann, F, 6-6/Jr. (4.8 ppg, 14.0 mpg); Brett McFall, G, 6-0/Soph. (12.9 mpg); Ugo Udezue, F, 6-8/Soph. (4.2 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 16.5 mpg).
Top newcomers: Pasha Bains, G/F, 6-4/Fr.; Anthony Blakes, G, 6-2/Jr. (RS/ankle); Josh Davis, F, 6-8/Fr.; LeDarion Jones, F, 6-7/Jr. (transfer/Clemson); Chris McMillian, G, 5-10/Fr.; John Pettersson, F, 6-9/Fr.; Jimmy White, G/F, 6-5/Fr.
Last league title: 1986. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1988.
Site: Laramie, Wyo. **Home court:** Arena Auditorium (15,028).

6. COLORADO STATE

Frontcourt: The Rams had a potent front line with Ryan Chilton, Bryan Christiansen and Matt Barnett. They were big, talented and had good chemistry between them. Too bad they didn't have another year of eligibility, because new coach Ritchie McKay would be sitting pretty. His challenge is to replace the bulk of CSU's scoring and rebounding, and he has inherited a couple of candidates. John Ford has two years' experience, so he'll get a shot. South African Phillip Von Backstrom, who stands 7-2, likely will replace the 7-foot Chilton. Redshirt Paul Martin and JC transfer David Fisher also will get minutes up front. But one of the big reasons CSU won 20 games back-to-back was because of Chilton,

Christiansen and Barnett, along with James Smith, who did a fine job at small forward. Those four will be tough to replace.

Backcourt: One of the WAC's better two-way guards is Milt Palacio, who runs the point soundly and is a top-notch defender. He can score in bunches, too, which makes him a lot like Utah's Andre Miller in that regard. How well he adjusts his game to McKay's coaching style will be critical. As for who teams with Palacio, look for either swingman Tony Trimble, freshman Erik Smith or redshirt John Sivesind. Andre McCanstry likely will get first crack at replacing Jameel Mahmud. But it's Palacio's show to run, and he's the one guy in the program who always has the green light.

Keys to success: How quickly can McKay, who was hired in late August from Portland State, put his stamp on this program? And how quickly will the players adjust to McKay's up-tempo style? Under former coach Stew Morrill, Colorado State wasn't a running team. Can Palacio get someone to complement him, as Mahmud did? They were a terrific tandem and forced teams to play Colorado State straight up. And to run successfully, you have to control the defensive glass. If the Rams struggle on the boards, they'll struggle trying to go up-tempo.

Outlook: Back-to-back 20-win seasons and just one NIT appearance to show for it? That's not a good sign, especially with four starters lost. Plus, CSU will face some athletic teams within its division. UNLV, Tulsa, TCU and SMU can motor. How will the Rams keep pace? Look for the Rams to play differently than in the past—pushing the ball at every opportunity, shooting “3s”, pressuring opponents into mistakes. It could be a lot of fun for the players. Whether that translates into a third consecutive 20-win season is debatable. But don't bet on three in a row.

Rams Data

Coach: Ritchie McKay (first year; 24-29 overall, 2 years).
1997-98 record: 20-9. WAC: 8-6/4th Pacific Division.
 Lost to Minnesota in NIT first round.
Starters lost (4): Matt Barnett, F (9.1 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 77.2 FT%, 3.2 apg, 32.6 mpg); Ryan Chilton, C (8.8 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 2.5 bpg, 24.7 mpg); Bryan Christiansen, F (11.1 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 73.0 FT%, 25.7 mpg); Jameel Mahmud, G (13.7 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 76.9 FT%, 36.9 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 31.0 mpg).
Others lost: James Smith, G/F (10.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg).
Starters returning (1): Milt Palacio, G, 6-3/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 47.8 FG%, 37.7 3-pt%, 5.1 apg, 1.6 spg, 33.0 mpg).
Other returnees: John Ford, F, 6-9/Jr. (10.0 mpg); Andre McCanstry, G, 6-1/Sr. (13.1 mpg).
Top newcomers: Sam Adamo, G, 6-3/Fr.; David Fisher, F, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Cedric Goodwyn, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Shawn Harris, G/F, 6-9/Soph. (JC); Paul Martin, C/F, 6-9/Soph. (transfer/Colorado Mines); John Sivesind, G, 6-3/Soph. (transfer/Wright State); Erik Smith, G, 6-3/Fr.; Tony Trimble, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (JC); Philip Von Backstrom, C, 7-2/Jr. (JC).
Last league title: 1990. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1990.
Site: Fort Collins, Colo. **Home court:** Moby Arena (9,001).

7. RICE

Frontcourt: Coach Willis Wilson has gotten good results from transfers in the past, namely Bobby Crawford and Jarvis Kelley-Sanni. So why not go back to the same well? He can only hope T.J. McKenzie (from Providence), Jason Skaer (Oklahoma State) and Erik Cooper (Loyola, Md.) can lend a hand to returnees Derek Michaelis, Robert Johnson and T.J. Armstrong. With the exception of Michaelis, the others are between 6-4 and 6-6, so look for Rice to try and attack the basket and score in

transition. Because he's the biggest player in the program, Alex Bougaieff will play regularly in the middle. But his numbers weren't great last season, and he'll have to improve a lot to make a real impact. Wilson believes Bougaieff can be a big-time rebounder. Supposedly, he bulked up in the offseason. But there will be depth, especially at small forward, and that should lead to more points, which Rice can use.

Backcourt: It's never easy to replace your best player, but Wilson better find someone to fill Crawford's spot. He did too many things well, even for a team that finished 6-22. Mike Wilks will get a chance to run the team at the point, but how will he handle the added burden? Shawn Tyndell may find himself swinging between small forward and big guard. Same with Johnson. And there's going to be a chance for freshman Keenan Holmes to show what he can do. But the emphasis is clearly shifting from the backcourt to the big guys up front.

Key to success: Win as many early-season games as possible to build some confidence. Remember, this team won just six games last year. The early schedule isn't all that tough, even by Rice's standards, and five of the Owls' first seven league games are at home. They need to find a way to spring an upset or two along the way if they hope to compete. And if they are to compete, the small forwards and big guys must make serious contributions.

Outlook: Houston, we have a problem. A big problem—there are too many good teams in front of Rice. In addition, there is a second-half WAC schedule that has the team playing five of its last seven on the road. And there's a sketchy backcourt. If Wilson can get this team back to double-digit victories and stay out of the Mountain cellar, he'll deserve a thumbs-up.

Owls Data

Coach: Willis Wilson (80-88, 6 years)
1997-98 record: 6-22. WAC: 3-11/7th Pacific Division.
Starters lost (2): Bobby Crawford, G (13.4 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 72.1 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 3.9 apg, 1.2 spg, 32.2 mpg); Jarvis Kelley-Sanni, F/C (14.8 ppg, 9.4 rpg, 49.7 FG%, 32.8 mpg).
Others lost: None.
Starters returning (3): Robert Johnson, F, 6-4/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 74.7 FT%, 29.7 mpg); Derek Michaelis, F, 6-8/Soph. (6.9 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 24.0 mpg); Josh Stringer, G, 6-2/Jr. (19.6 mpg).
Other returnees: T.J. Armstrong, F, 6-5/Sr. (13.1 mpg); Alex Bougaieff, C, 6-11/Jr. (5.0 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 19.3 mpg); Shawn Tyndell, F, 6-5/Soph.; Mike Wilks, G, 5-10/Soph. (4.8 ppg, 1.1 spg, 22.0 mpg).
Top newcomers: Erik Cooper, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Loyola, Md.); Keenan Holmes, G, 6-3/Fr.; T.J. McKenzie, C, 6-11/Soph. (transfer/Providence); Ferron Morgan, C, 6-10/Fr.; Jason Skaer, F, 6-7/Sr. (transfer/Oklahoma State).
Last league title: 1970 (SWC).
Last NCAA appearance: 1970.
Site: Houston. **Home court:** Autry Court (5,000).

8. AIR FORCE

Frontcourt: Size always is a problem at the Academy, since those F-16s aren't meant for big guys. That means those who play inside have to be tough and tenacious. David Schuck fits that description, and he is going to be a good power forward before he's done. He's the leading returning rebounder. Louis Stewart will be asked to score more after the Falcons lost their 1-2 punch of Jarmica Reese and Mike Freeman to graduation. Stewart isn't afraid to shoot, and he'll get plenty of chances to knock down shots. Replacing Freeman in the middle will be the

toughest chore. Steve Kincanon has limited experience, but that should change; he's the program's tallest player and will get his chance to play regular minutes. Billy Humphrey will back up both forward spots, though he's more of a small forward than a power forward. He's a capable player and can contribute scoring and rebounding.

Backcourt: When you lose one of the top scorers in school history, it definitely sets you back. And losing Reese is a big blow. His 19 points a game will be missed, but so will his leadership. Point guard Miguel Garcia must do a better job running the club. He must score more; then again, so will everyone who wears the blue and white. There's simply no individual in the program who can match Reese's offensive output. Dylan Pope is a good long-range threat off the bench. Or maybe Lawrence Yazzie, Javon Hollins and Glen Gonzales can take advantage of the opening and bring something to the court. On the surface, it doesn't appear they can or will.

Keys to success: Air Force usually picks up a few early-season wins against low-level Division I teams or D-2 squads such as Doane, Regis and Kathie Lee. But once the bell rings for the start of WAC play, the Falcons get their wings clipped. Last year, six of the 10 wins came before the start of league play. So if Air Force is going to enjoy any success, look for it to come before New Year's Day. If someone can fill Reese's void and give the team some backcourt scoring, the Falcons can be competitive on a lot of nights.

Outlook: As always, Air Force is in a tough spot. Recruiting to the Academy is vastly different than the other WAC schools, so coach Reggie Minton is constantly working at a disadvantage. Nobody knows what to expect from this year's recruiting class, since it never gets announced until classes begin in September. But judging by who's returning and what lies ahead, it's going to be a battle with Rice to stay out of the cellar. The head-to-head games with the Owls could determine the Falcons' fate in their final year in the WAC.

Falcons Data

Coach: Reggie Minton (132-260, 14 years; 143-275 overall, 15 years).
1997-98 record: 10-16. WAC: 2-12/8th Mountain Division.
Starters lost (2): Mike Freeman, F/C (13.5 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 70.4 FT%, 29.7 mpg); Jarmica Reese, G (18.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 70.8 FT%, 41.8 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 35.0 mpg).
Others lost: Michael Isenhour, F/C (left school); Rod Smith, G; Bryan Summers, F (left on mission).
Starters returning (3): Miguel Garcia, G, 6-6/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 45.0 FG%, 37.8 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 21.8 mpg); David Schuck, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.9 ppg, 5.0 mpg, 1.2 bpg, 23.8 mpg); Louis Stewart, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 46.9 FG%, 22.0 mpg).
Other returnees: Glen Gonzales, G, 5-10/Sr.; Steve Kincanon, C, 6-9/Soph.; Dylan Pope, G, 6-3/Jr. (6.0 ppg, 75.0 FT%, 39.5 3-pt%, 20.7 mpg); Jovan Hollins, G, 6-3/Sr.; Billy Humphrey, F, 6-6/Jr. (4.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 16.7 mpg); Lawrence Yazzie, G, 5-10/Jr.
Top newcomers: Christopher Campbell, C, 6-9/Fr.; Seth Fowler, G, 6-1/Fr.; Kevin George, G, 6-1/Fr.; Brian Hedlund, F/C, 6-6/Fr.; Selwyn Mansell, G, 5-10/Fr.; John Nodilo, G, 6-5/Fr.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1962.
Site: Colorado Springs. **Home court:** Clune Arena (6,002).

PACIFIC DIVISION

1. NEW MEXICO

Frontcourt: Look for a definitely leaner, and possible keener, Kenny Thomas this season. That's what coach Dave Bliss is looking for. Thomas weighed about 275 pounds last year, and Bliss wants the All-American center candidate at 255. At that weight, the theory goes, a more mobile Thomas might even improve his solid '97-98 numbers and his status in the eyes of NBA scouts. Thomas has to wait until the sixth game of the regular season to start his senior year as part of an agreement ending courtroom tussles with the NCAA, so he should be keen when the time comes. And Bliss is keen to see Thomas show senior maturity, especially when things aren't always going his way. Forward Damion Walker was a freshman All-American at TCU whose stats dipped as a sophomore. That prompted a transfer when his role figured to be diminished even more by the arrival of Lee Nailon in Fort Worth. The arrival of Walker in Albuquerque gives Thomas a reliable low-post partner, someone who can alleviate some of the double- and triple-teaming Thomas will face. But Walker should be a force in his own right, enabling the Lobos to work from the high post for the first time in a long time. Brian Smith, a transfer from the University of San Diego, has the height and ability to fill in for Thomas and will be asked to do just that while Thomas sits early. Roland Hannah gets the first look at small forward, where he'll be the tallest Lobo at the position in a while but not nearly the 3-point threat of his predecessors. Bliss is looking more for defense and rebounding than "3s" anyway.

Backcourt: Lamont Long, Kevin Henry and a trio of highly regarded newcomers give the Lobos plenty to howl about. Long started living up to the promise he showed in an Arizona high school career overshadowed only by contemporary Mike Bibby. Late in his freshman season and at times last season, Long exhibited star qualities, and the Lobos see no reason he can't be the go-to guy on the perimeter at off-guard. He had games of 31 and 27 points (twice) last season, but also was held scoreless twice and to single figures three times. Henry produced key plays in last year's WAC tourney and in the first-round NCAA win over Butler, signaling his readiness for this season. At the very least, he will reprise the sixth man/swingman role he played so well last year. JC transfer Dontay Hicks and freshmen John Robinson II and Tim Lightfoot have solid credentials; it's just a question of who is quickest to develop.

Key to success: The backcourt successors to Royce Olney, the linchpin of last season's success, and David Gibson, old reliable for four years, must come through. How important was Olney to the '97-98 Lobos? They were 21-4 and headed to their best season ever when his season was ended by a knee injury. The Lobos went 3-4 the rest of the way.

Outlook: New Mexico is in the midst of the most prosperous stretch of basketball in school history. The past three seasons, the Lobos have posted records of 28-5, 25-8 and 24-8, a win total (77) surpassed by just eight other schools during the period. This year the Lobos will rely less on the 3-point shot and more on the three-point play than in recent seasons, rely more on athleticism and less on finesse. But rely on them to be prominent, as usual, in the WAC and the national rankings.

Lobos Data

Coach: Dave Bliss (221-99, 10 years; 440-262 overall, 23 years; 7-10 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 24-8. WAC: 11-3/2nd Mountain Division. Lost to Syracuse in NCAA South second round.

Starters lost (3): David Gibson, G (5.9 ppg, 47.2 FG%, 78.0 FT%, 3.6 apg, 1.3 spg, 35.4 mpg); Royce Olney, G (14.8 ppg, 53.6 FG%, 75.4 FT%, 51.3 3-pt%, 4.0 apg, 1.6 spg, 32.0 mpg); Clayton Shields, F (16.7 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 45.7 FG%, 73.3 FT%, 40.7 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 34.7 mpg).

Others lost: Ben Baum, F/C (9.4 mpg); Ryan Noce, C; Tom Starkey, G (transfer).

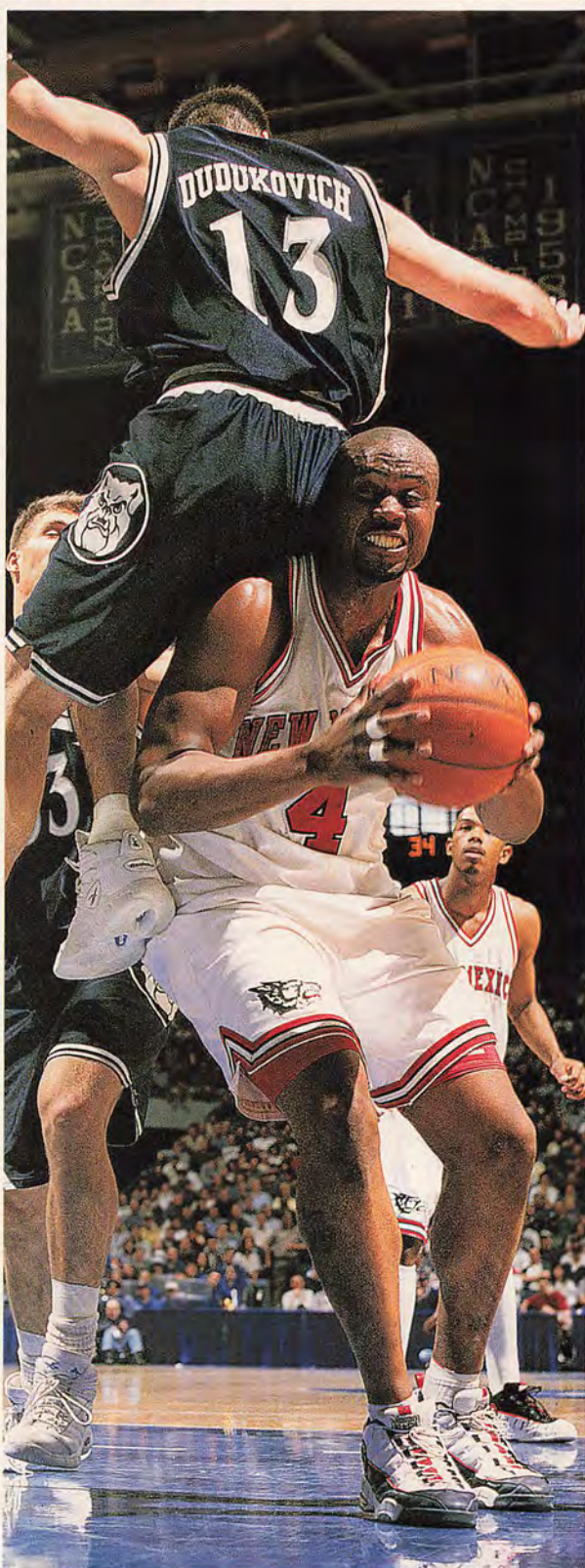
Starters returning (2): Lamont Long, G, 6-4/Jr. (14.1 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 46.1 FG%, 76.7 FT%, 1.5 spg, 37.2 mpg); Kenny Thomas, C, 6-8/Sr. (16.8 ppg, 9.3 rpg, 50.6 FG%, 76.7 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 2.5 bpg, 32.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Greg Davis, F, 6-9/Soph.; Kevin Henry, G, 6-3/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 72.2 FT%, 38.6 3-pt%, 17.2 mpg); Marcos White, G, 5-7/Sr.

Top newcomers: Drew Gauden, F, 6-8/Fr.; Roland Hannah, G, 6-6/Jr. (JC/RS); Dontay Hicks, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Tim Lightfoot, G, 6-4/Fr.; John Robinson II, G, 6-1/Fr.; Brian Smith, F, 6-9/Soph. (transfer/San Diego); Damion Walker, F, 6-7/Jr. (transfer/TCU).

Last league title: 1994. **Last time didn't make NCAA field:** 1995.

Site: Albuquerque, N.M. **Home court:** University Arena (18,018).



Thomas is one of the best low-post scorers in the nation. He could be even more effective by dropping some weight. Expect him to lead the Lobos in scoring—and to a high NCAA seeding.

BRIAN SPURLOCK

2. UTAH

Frontcourt: Starting forwards Hanno Mottola and Alex Jensen return from last year's NCAA championship finalist, but big man Michael Doleac is gone to the NBA. As sophomores, Mottola and Jensen showed they knew what coach Rick Majerus wanted—and delivered. He'll want a little more scoring and rebounding and just as much defense from both this season—and don't be surprised if he gets it. Especially from Mottola, who got better as last year progressed and seemed ready and willing to handle the go-to load. Little-used Nate Althoff gets first shot to fill the Doleac hole, but he comes with questions. Althoff is 20 pounds lighter than Doleac, played in only 17 games and averaged less than two points and two rebounds per game. He also is coming off minor summer surgery. On the plus side, Althoff has the benefit of a year practicing against Doleac and learning the Majerus/Utah way. He has a license to emerge. If he doesn't, Majerus may need to do some improvisation that could involve freshmen Phil Cullen or Tyson Johnston. The main front-court help could come from JC transfer Tony Harvey.

Backcourt: Andre Miller's May 8 decision to stay for his final season rather than go the NBA way elicited sighs of relief in Salt Lake City. Majerus calls Miller the best point guard in the country. Those who saw his triple-double against Arizona and other performances in the Utes' NCAA run aren't inclined to argue. Miller also was the floor leader for the gold-winning U.S. Goodwill Games team and came up with key baskets in overtime of the championship game. JC transfer Jeremy Killion, Miller's likely backcourt mate, averaged 27 points on 52 percent shooting from the field and 46 percent from 3-point range last season. He'll replace the graduated Drew Hansen, who contributed a lot more than just stats to the Utes' recent success.

Key to success: Mormon missions (Trace Caton, Britton Johnsen, Jon Carlisle) and just plain transfers (David Jackson, Jordie McTavish) wiped out a wealth of young talent that looked ready to keep things rolling in Salt Lake City. Majerus has had players opt for missions before, just never three in one year. He wishes the missionaries well and admires their commitment, but he also hopes he won't have any mid-season longings to insert someone who's in Ecuador into the lineup. The transfers were by mutual agreement, and the Utes recruited two additional freshmen, Brad Crockett and Ben Heusser, plus sophomore Shane Willis (who played a year at Hawaii before serving a two-year church mission) to do more than fill roster spots. Majerus must indoctrinate eight newcomers to the Ute way and blend them with the considerable returning talent, but it's not something he hasn't done before.

Outlook: With all of the changes, the early part of the season could be interesting. Majerus calls it a rebuilding year, but they'll probably be the usual Utes by the time conference play starts: playing fundamentally sound ball, rugged man-to-man defense and winning, winning, winning. Do they have enough to make a return trip to the Final Four? Probably not, but who would have guessed last season's team would go after the loss of Keith Van Horn?

Utes Data

Coach: Rick Majerus (210-59, 9 years; 309-111 overall, 14 years; 15-7 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 30-4, WAC: 12-2/1st Mountain Division. Lost to Kentucky in NCAA finals.

Starters lost (2): Michael Doleac, C (16.1 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 80.5 FT%, 40.6 3-pt%, 1.0 bpg, 27.4 mpg); Drew Hansen, G (5.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 45.6 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 27.0 mpg).

Others lost: Greg Barratt, F (transfer); Jon Carlisle, C (10.3 mpg/left on church mission); Trace Caton, G (4.0 ppg, 41.7 3-pt%, 14.3 mpg/left on church mission); David Jackson, G (77.3 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 14.6 mpg; transfer/Oregon); Britton Johnsen, F (11.1 mpg/left on church mission); Jordie McTavish (9.8 mpg/transfer).

Starters returning (3): Alex Jensen, F, 6-9/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 45.7 FG%, 74.7 FT%, 27.9 mpg); Andre Miller, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.2 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 54.9 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 5.2 apg, 2.1 spg, 31.6 mpg); Hanno Mottola, F, 6-10/Jr. (12.5 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 75.4 3-pt%, 28.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Nate Althoff, C, 6-11/Soph.

Top newcomers: Brad Crockett, F, 6-6/Fr.; Phil Cullen, C/F, 6-10/Fr.; Tony Harvey, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Ben Heusser, G, 6-0/Fr.; Tyson Johnston, C/F, 6-11/Fr.; Jeremy Killion, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Adam Sharp, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Shane Willis, G, 6-0/Soph. (transfer/Hawaii).

Last league title: 1998. **Last time didn't make NCAA field:** 1994.

Site: Salt Lake City. **Home court:** Huntsman Center (15,000).



Jensen (50) and Mottola (13) need to step up their production in the wake of Doleac's departure. Mottola has the most offensive potential; he's a good outside shooter and also can slash to the basket.



A solid season from Herren is vital for the Bulldogs. If he can handle the move to point guard from off-guard, Fresno State has a chance to have one of the best backcourts in the nation.

3. FRESNO STATE

Frontcourt: Two years ago, Jerry Tarkanian was quoted as calling center Melvin Ely "the best big man I've ever recruited." Now he prefers to call him the "most highly regarded." Either way, that's high praise, and this is the season Ely—who sat out last season as a Prop 48—gets to show

whether he's worthy of it. He may not be a big scorer—there are others for that—but expectations are high regarding rebounding and blocking shots. Terrence Roberson is a proven 3-point shooter capable of extended hot streaks. Forward Larry Abney is comfortable doing the tough stuff inside.

Backcourt: Chris Herren is a bit behind

Utah's Andre Miller in any ranking of the WAC's best point guards. Last season, Herren led the Bulldogs in scoring and earned first-team All-WAC Pacific Division honors. Herren will move from shooting guard to the point this year, the better to hone his skills to NBA standards at the position. He'll be joined in the backcourt by Virginia transfer Courtney Alexander, a former two-time honorable mention All-ACC selection. Alexander was a 45 percent-plus shooter overall and from 3-point range at Virginia, and he should help fill the offensive void left when Rafer Alston left Fresno after one season to pursue his NBA dreams.

Key to success: The blue-chip talents, of which there aren't quite as many as the past two years, need to stay eligible and keep their eyes on the team prize rather than individual glory. Suspensions and me-itis have undermined Bulldogs teams the past two seasons, and excesses have overshadowed successes.

Outlook: The Bulldogs came within two minutes of the NIT final last year, but Tarkanian said he still didn't feel good about the season. Suspensions, ineligibilities and lack of chemistry made it so that only opponents of far inferior talent felt they had to beware of the 'Dogs. Many of the problem players have moved on, so that should help. If the talent that remains meshes quickly, this team of greatly lowered expectations might live up to the high ones of the past two years.

Bulldogs Data

Coach: Jerry Tarkanian (63-36, 3 years; 688-158 overall, 27 years; 37-16 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title with UNLV in 1990).

1997-98 record: 21-13. WAC: 10-4/2nd Pacific Division. Lost to Georgia in NIT third-place game.

Starters lost (3): Rafer Alston, G (11.0 ppg, 75.8 FT%, 7.3 apg, 2.1 spg, 31.2 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Tremaine Fowlkes, F (13.9 ppg, 11.2 rpg, 49.1 FG%, 1.6 spg, 28.3 mpg; declared for NBA draft); Avondre Jones, C (9.5 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 3.1 bpg, 25.3 mpg).

Others lost: Daymond Forney, F (11.4 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 1.6 bpg, 25.1 mpg); Winfred Walton, F (11.1 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.2 spg, 22.6 mpg; declared for NBA draft).

Starters returning (2): Chris Herren, G, 6-3/Sr. (15.6 ppg, 46.7 FG%, 36.2 3-pt%, 4.8 apg, 1.9 spg, 32.9 mpg); Terrence Roberson, F, 6-7/Sr. (14.6 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 46.0 FG%, 40.8 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 32.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Larry Abney, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (5.5 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 60.7 FG%, 15.7 mpg); Willie Farley, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (8.3 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 2.0 spg, 27.5 mpg); Demetrius Porter, G, 6-0/Soph. (12.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Courtney Alexander, G, 6-5/Jr. (transfer/Virginia); Andrea Bona, F, 6-7/Fr.; Travis DeManby, G, 6-3/Fr.; Melvin Ely, C, 6-11/Soph. (Prop 48); Randy Holcomb, F, 6-8/Soph. (Prop 48); Shaun Jackson, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Shomario Richard, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Fresno, Calif. **Home court:** Selland Arena (10,220).

4. HAWAII

Frontcourt: This is the team's strength. The Rainbows have two of the best leapers in the league in forwards Erin "The Helicopter" Galloway and Mike Robinson, the latter back for one more year by virtue of a hardship appeal granted by the NCAA. Both are considered better jumpers than jump shooters, but they'll still be trouble for most teams. With newcomers Marquette Alexander and

Gary Gillman, both reputed scorers, also available, Galloway and Robinson shouldn't have to be overworked. Bryan Moeller is the latest in a line of 7-foot Hawaii centers, and Peter Kecskes returns from a redshirt season to back him up.

Backcourt: The best little-known guard combo in the country, Anthony Carter and Alike Smith, has moved on, leaving coach Riley Wallace to do what he has done with great success in the past—fill from the JC ranks. The top candidates are Johnny White and Geremy Robinson. Damon Lee and freshman Mike Macintyre will be aiming to surprise.

Key to success: The scoring power of the past two years left with Carter and Smith, terrific outside shooters who accounted for 45 percent of the Rainbows' points last year. A recruiting class that one service rated among the top 30 in the country looks capable of replacing what was lost, but that's no slam dunk. The key is Mike Robinson, who has failed to shoot even 50 percent from the floor in his first two seasons at Hawaii. That must change.

Outlook: The Rainbows have flirted with making the NCAA Tournament the past two years and pulled off the biggest win in school history last season, a 76-65 win over No. 2 Kansas in the championship game of the Rainbow Classic. That was all well and good, but they didn't display much of a finishing punch, settling for a spot in the NIT for the second consecutive year. Wallace contends this year's team may have more overall talent and, if the chemistry works, will compete at the same high level.

Rainbows Data

Coach: Riley Wallace (176-152, 11 years; 191-179 overall, 13 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 21-9. WAC: 8-6/4th Pacific Division. Lost to Fresno State in NIT third round.

Starters lost (4): Eric Ambrozich, F (8.4 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 76.6 FT%, 26.7 mpg); Anthony Carter, G (18.2 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 45.3 FG%, 78.2 FT%, 7.3 apg, 2.2 spg, 35.9 mpg); Micah Kroeger, F (10.3 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 1.2 spg, 30.1 mpg); Alike Smith, G (18.3 ppg, 81.7 FT%, 37.4 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 1.5 spg, 36.7 mpg).

Others lost: Chad Hook, G (transfer); Greg Miller, F (transfer); Ales Zivanovic, F.

Starters returning (1): Mike Robinson, F, 6-8/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 1.1 spg, 23.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Casey Cartwright, F, 6-5/Sr. (5.4 ppg, 46.2 FG%, 76.5 FT%, 14.1 mpg); Erin Galloway, F, 6-8/Sr. (7.6 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 58.3 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 25.8 mpg); Bryan Moeller, C, 7-0/Sr.

Top newcomers: Marquette Alexander, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Philip Czernin, G/F, 6-5/Fr. (RS); Gary Gillman, F, 6-4/Soph. (JC); Peter Kecskes, C, 6-11/Fr. (RS); Damon Lee, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Mike Macintyre, G, 6-2/Fr.; Geremy Robinson, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Johnny White, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Honolulu. **Home court:** Stan Sheriff Center (10,300).

5. BYU

Frontcourt: Bret Jepsen returned from a Mormon mission and took most of the season to remove the rust from his game. Performances in a stunning upset at New Mexico late in the regular season and against Tulsa in the WAC Tournament indicate he'll

be much better this season. Mekeli Wesley, the top newcomer in the Mountain Division, had two 31-point games and led the conference in free-throw shooting (90.6 percent) in WAC games. The Cougars also are looking for big things from Silester Rivers, a highly touted JC transfer who is supposed to be a good scorer. That's important since the Cougars' leading scorer from last year, Ron Selleaze, was suspended from school and transferred.

Backcourt: The Cougars have a zone-busting shooter in Danny Bower, a defensive specialist in Brian Dignan and a playmaker in Brian Hamilton. That trio will be joined by a trio of newly returned missionaries looking to find niches of their own. Nathan Cooper and Todd Christensen got significant minutes as freshmen, while Michael Vranes, a distant cousin of ex-NBAer Danny, has tremendous potential as yet unfulfilled because of injuries.

Key to success: Finishing last season with wins at New Mexico and UTEP to qualify for the WAC Tournament went a long way toward restoring confidence in a program shaken to the core by the 1-25 season of '96-97. Building on that base is a must if BYU is to go much further this season, but the schedule, highlighted by Arizona's first visit to Provo since leaving the WAC in 1978, will do the Cougars no favors.

Outlook: When Selleaze, a second-team All-WAC pick, and Michael Garrett, a redshirt expected to start at guard this season, were dismissed from the team last spring, it was a double blow. First to the program's image, second to the talent level. It may take a while to repair the former, but it looks like much already has been done to repair the latter. Still, it will be tough for BYU to finish in the upper half of the division.

Cougars Data

Coach: Steve Cleveland (9-21, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 9-21. WAC: 4-10/6th Mountain Division.

Starters lost (2): Ron Selleaze, F (16.8 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 70.7 FT%, 1.1 spg, 34.2 mpg; suspended from school); Justin Weidauer, F (9.0 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 74.0 FT%, 1.2 spg, 28.8 mpg).

Others lost: Jarkko Ahlbom, C; Talmadge Eyre, F (Mormon mission); Chris Handy, F (Mormon mission); Bart Jepsen, F (11.9 mpg/Mormon mission); Jared Peterson, F (9.9 mpg); Robbie Yates, G.

Starters returning (3): Danny Bower, G, 6-4/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 77.9 FT%, 36.4 3-pt%, 25.2 mpg); Brian Hamilton, G, 6-0/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 70.0 FT%, 26.9 mpg); Mekeli Wesley, F, 6-9/Soph. (13.5 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 77.4 FT%, 29.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Lance Archibald, G, 6-3/Sr.; Todd Christensen, G, 6-1/Soph. (Mormon mission); Nathan Cooper, G, 6-5/Soph. (Mormon mission); Brian Dignan, G, 6-3/Sr. (76.9 FT%, 4.0 apg, 28.4 mpg); Bret Jepsen, C, 6-11/Jr. (3.3 rpg, 15.0 mpg); Michael Vranes, G, 6-3/Fr. (RS/medical).

Top newcomers: Mark Bigelow, G, 6-6/Fr.; Mark Michaelis, C, 6-10/Soph. (JC); David Nielsen, G, 6-4/Fr.; Silester Rivers, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1993.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Provo, Utah. **Home court:** Marriott Center (22,700).

6. UTEP

Frontcourt: Sharif Fajardo led the Miners in scoring and rebounding last season and is the fourth- and sixth-leading returnee, respec-

tively, in the conference in those areas. Trying to keep him under a semblance of control will be Job 1 for all opponents. Jon Bomba hasn't had the impact one would think for someone his size (6-11, 230), but there's hope for a late bloom. Swingman Will Smith and sixth man Brandon Wolfram combined for 19.5 points and nine rebounds per game, and Wolfram made the all-newcomer team. Look for Wolfram to be improved and get more starts and more minutes. Adrian Coffey, a former Chicago prep standout, transfers in with three years of eligibility remaining. At 6-5, 235, he has the size to provide some muscle.

Backcourt: Point guard problems have plagued the Miners the past two years; last season, UTEP had 22 more turnovers than assists. Poncho Sanders handled the job most of the year and probably will again. Although he had more assists than turnovers, Sanders was a dreadful 3-point (26.8 percent) and overall field-goal shooter (32.2). Then again, he wasn't much worse than anybody else on a team that was weak from long range. With B.J. Wade gone, the Miners will audition a running mate for Sanders. Rico Nelson warmed up for the role last year, but newcomer Winfred "Eggie" McRae has the JC credentials and jazzy nickname to appear to be a good match. Jarvis Mullahon, a full-blooded Navajo, will get a look as a walk-on. Victor Lucas and Javier Mendoza also figure in the mix.

Key to success: The Miners have experience, especially up front, and will need to exploit it in a division where several teams will be counting on newcomers. Of course, their opponents probably look forward to exploiting the UTEP guards.

Outlook: Although the Miners finished just two games below .500, it was not one of Don Haskins' most memorable teams. UTEP struggled on the road, from beyond the arc, at the line and at the end of the season. The numbers were 2-7 away from home, 30.8 percent on 3-pointers, 65 percent on free throws and 0-7 in February and March. Pick an area, any area, and improvement is needed. Another losing season is probable.

Miners Data

Coach: Don Haskins (703-341, 38 years; 14-13 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA title in 1966).

1997-98 record: 12-14. WAC: 3-11/7th Mountain Division.

Starters lost (1): B.J. Wade, G/F (10.4 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 71.2 FT%, 28.6 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (4): Jon Bomba, C, 6-11/Sr. (14.8 mpg); Sharif Fajardo, F, 6-8/Sr. (15.4 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 74.6 FT%, 1.2 spg, 29.4 mpg); William Smith, G/F, 6-3/Jr. (12.7 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 45.0 FG%, 31.4 mpg); Pancho Sanders, G, 5-10/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 3.3 apg, 1.3 spg, 26.9 mpg).

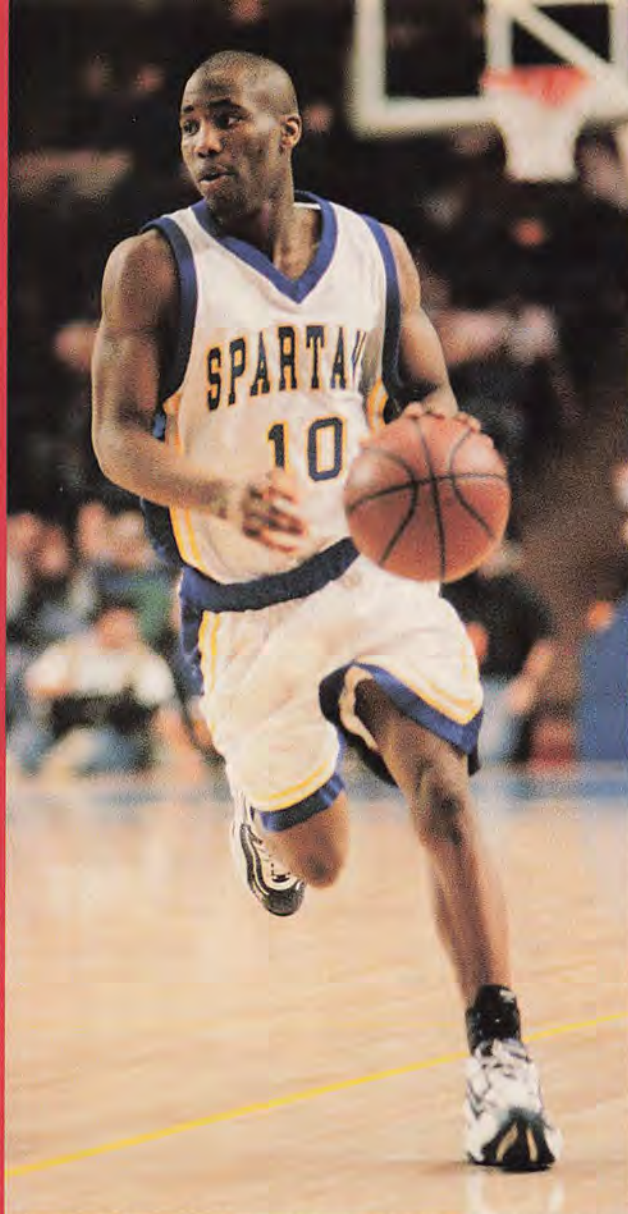
Other returnees: Cary Collins, F, 6-5/Jr. (RS); Chris Lewis, F, 6-5/Jr. (RS); Brandon Wolfram, F, 6-8/Soph. (6.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 57.6 FG%, 22.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Adrian Coffey, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Winfred McRae, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Jarvis Mullahon, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1992.

Last NCAA appearance: 1992.

Site: El Paso, Texas. **Home court:** Don Haskins Center (12,222).



RON FRED / SAN JOSE STATE

A lot of the offensive production will fall to Quinney, who is San Jose State's only returning player who scored in double figures last season. But it's imperative that he improve his shooting eye.

7. SAN DIEGO STATE

Frontcourt: For experience, there is Marcelo Correa, a sometime starter but significant factor in only two or three games last year. And that's it. So minutes are there for the taking for freshmen Joe Mann, Vincent Okotie, Jackson Jones, Myron Epps, Julian Sormonte and Walter Small. Mann, from Poway High in San Diego, is the best big-man freshman recruit the Aztecs have reeled in in at least a decade. Okotie and Epps are packages of power and speed, respectively. Jones and Sormonte have size with potential to sting from the perimeter. Small is used to defending against and rebounding with bigger opponents. But all of them are stepping up from high school to Division I.

Backcourt: For experience, there's Matt

Watts, a starter at shooting guard with a commendable but by no means dominating game on both ends of the court. And that's it. So minutes are there for the taking for JC transfer Donte Wilson and freshmen David Abramowitz and Jeffrey Berokoff. Wilson has played both point and off-guard and may complement Watts because of a similar style. Abramowitz was the floor leader of his high school team, which won a divisional California state championship. Berokoff is solidly built and has a reputation for hard-nosed play and scoring ability.

Key to success: Michigan had its "Fab Five" a few years back, and San Diego State now has its "Emerald Eight." No, this group isn't as good as Michigan's. But by San Diego State standards, the frosh octet looks like a gem of a class. Still, until it proves itself, it's just a bunch of green kids. As they go, so goes this season for the Aztecs.

Outlook: The recruiting class was, based strictly on fall signees, ranked among the top 30 in the nation. That was unprecedentedly high for SDSU. But even if the talent gap with the rest of the league has been narrowed, there may be some painful lessons to be learned on the road to experience.

Aztecs Data

Coach: Fred Trenkle (51-61, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 13-15, WAC: 5-9/6th Pacific Division.

Starters lost (4): Kevin Betts, F (11.6 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 59.8 FG%, 73.9 FT%, 1.8 spg, 33.6 mpg); Roy Kruiswyk, F/C (11.7 ppg, 8.4 rpg, 55.8 FG%, 35.5 mpg); Jason Richey, G (17.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 85.7 FT%, 35.6 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 36.0 mpg); Josko Visnjic, F (9.4 ppg, 83.3 FT%, 25.7 mpg).

Others lost: Aaron Brown, F (transfer); Fred Ross, G (left school).

Starters returning (1): Matt Watts, G, 6-3/Sr. (12.9 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 3.8 apg, 2.2 spg, 35.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Marcelo Correa, C, 6-10/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 19.9 mpg); David Kaplansky, G, 5-9/Sr.; Brady Trenkle, G, 5-9/Sr. (RS/heart virus).

Top newcomers: David Abramowitz, G, 6-0/Fr.; Jeffrey Berokoff, G, 6-3/Fr.; Myron Epps, F, 6-6/Fr.; Jackson Jones, F, 6-7/Fr.; Joe Mann, C, 6-10/Fr.; Vincent Okotie, F, 6-7/Fr.; Julian Sormonte, F, 6-5/Fr.; Walter Small, F, 6-4/Fr.; Donte Wilson, G, 6-3/Jr.

Last league title: 1978 (tie, Pacific Coast Athletic Association).

Last NCAA appearance: 1985.

Site: San Diego. **Home court:** Cox Arena (12,414).

8. SAN JOSE STATE

Frontcourt: Shaun Murray, Will Trawick, Brad Kennett and Maik Mertens comprise a returning group that was game but over-matched last season. Of the seven frontcourt players on this year's roster, only two (Murray and Mertens) are 6-9 or taller, making San Jose State one of the shortest teams in the conference, if not on the West Coast. The Spartans can only hope that a year's experience, plus anticipated physical and mental maturity, will help to cut the talent gap with the rest of the league somewhat. Pepperdine transfer Eric Griffin should provide muscle and depth.

Backcourt: Michael Quinney is the lone returnee who averaged in double figures last season. He was the team's only legitimate perimeter threat, hitting 36.2 percent of a school-record 174 3-point attempts. The bad news is he shot only 38 percent from the field overall, making rebounding a top priority. Alas, San Jose State was the WAC's worst rebounding team. Shawn McCullough had a terrible first two-thirds of the season but showed some spark in February. JC transfers Jeff Jacoway, Ben Sanders and Reggie Wilcox will challenge for time. Jacoway and Wilcox are playmaking types. Sanders, who began his career at UNLV, was a dependable scorer in high school and in junior college.

Key to success: The bumper of last year's 3-23 campaign is over, and the Spartans—who return eight of nine players and a key redshirt—must see that the memories don't linger. A few early wins to build confidence would help, and the home portion of the pre-WAC schedule isn't exactly daunting.

Outlook: New coach Phil Johnson, a former assistant under Lute Olson at Arizona, isn't promising any miracles in his first season as a major college head coach. The plan is to play good defense, use quickness and keep the best five players on the floor, regardless of position, as much as possible. Those are noble goals, and probably the only ones this team is capable of achieving.

Spartans Data

Coach: Phil Johnson (first year).

1997-98 record: 3-23, WAC: 1-13/8th Pacific Division.

Starters lost (1): Marmet Williams, G/F (12.0 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 78.5 FT%, 4.5 apg, 36.1 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (4): Shawn McCullough, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (4.0 ppg, 19.6 mpg); Shaun Murray, F, 6-9/Sr. (8.2 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 23.8 mpg); Michael Quinney, G, 5-10/Sr. (15.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 73.9 FT%, 1.2 spg, 34.7 mpg); Will Trawick, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 26.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Brant Boe, F, 6-6/Sr. (15.8 mpg); Reggie Cooks, F, 6-5/Soph.; Brad Kennett, F, 6-6/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 23.2 mpg); Maik Mertens, C, 7-0/Soph. (11.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Eric Griffin, F, 6-7/Soph.

(transfer/Pepperdine); Jeff Jacoway, G, 5-10/Jr. (JC); Ulysses Preston, G, 6-3/Fr.; Ben Sanders, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Reggie Wilcox, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1996.

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: San Jose, Calif. **Home court:** The Event Center (5,000).

TSN

inside dish

Ascending: Illinois State. It's hard to say ISU is ascending when the Redbirds have won the past two league titles. But ISU lost its top seven players from last year's NCAA team and still figures to be strong for years to come. While the Redbirds may not finish first this season, they have enough firepower to contend for the top spot. A year from now, they could be the favorite.

Descending: Bradley. The Braves signed just one player and have only 11 on their roster. While coach Jim Molinari has been able to consistently put winning teams on the floor, there have been rumblings that loyal Braves fans are concerned about the upcoming season following the loss of star Adebayo Akinkunle and no standout player ready to fill his shoes.

Biggest sneakers to fill: Illinois State forward Dan Muller's. He was Mr. Everything for the Redbirds, starting every game from the moment he stepped on campus as a freshman. Muller ranks among the school's career leaders in several departments. He also provided invaluable leadership to his teammates.

Most underrated player: Indiana State guard Nate Green. He has established himself as one of the premier guards in the league and is a threat to post a double-double in any game. He can play point and shooting guard, and his size allows him to guard small forwards around the basket.

Most overrated player: Wichita State forward Darrin Williams. Fans were excited when Williams, a local product, signed with the Shockers because they thought he would become a force in the middle. But Williams has yet to produce as expected.

Coach on the hot seat: Evansville's Jim Crews. With attendance dwindling and a new athletic director in place, the longtime coach could be in trouble if the Aces don't do better than last year's .500 campaign.

Best bets: There are some who believe Illinois State coach Kevin Stallings is one of the leading candidates for Tom Davis' job at Iowa next year. ... Drake will snap its 39-game conference losing streak this season. The Bulldogs' last league victory came three seasons ago. ... Coach Randy Smithson, who hasn't gotten enough credit for turning around the Wichita State program in a hurry, will guide the Shockers to their third consecutive winning season this year, a feat that hasn't been accomplished in nine years.

Odds and ends: Last season Illinois State became the first team in the Valley's 21-year tournament history to sweep the regular-season and postseason tournament titles in consecutive years. ... Last year, for the first time in school history, Southwest Missouri State did not play a game against a team from Missouri. This year the Bears will face all five Division I schools in the state. ... The two new coaches in the league come from impressive backgrounds. Northern Iowa's Sam Weaver was an assistant at Iowa State, and Southern Illinois' Bruce Weber toiled for 18 years at Purdue. ... Creighton has a chance to become the first team in league history to improve its overall and conference records in five consecutive seasons. ... The 1997-98 season marked just the second time in the MVC's 91-year history that seven teams finished at least .500 in league play.



Green is an underappreciated performer for Indiana State. His versatility is a big plus for the Sycamores, who are on the rise.

Ranking the Recruiting

Top recruit in parentheses

1. Illinois State (G Victor Williams). The Redbirds lost their two point guards, including Jamar Smiley, who ranks second in the Valley in career assists. But they were able to sign all-stars Williams, the player of the year in the Kansas City area, and Eric Bush, from Anderson, Ind. ISU also helped itself on the interior by landing Tyrone Brown from Butler County (Kan.) CC.
2. Wichita State (F Bart Westgeest).
3. Southwest Missouri (F Ron Bruton).
4. Indiana State (F Djibril Kante).
5. Evansville (C Matt Vidoni).
6. Drake (G Kareem Lee).
7. Northern Iowa (G Terry Rouse).
8. Southern Illinois (G Ricky Collum).
9. Bradley (F Milo Kirsch).
10. Creighton (F Nerijus Karlikanas).

By **BRYAN BLOODWORTH**
The Pantagraph (Bloomington, Ill.)

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Creighton | 6. Evansville |
| 2. SW Missouri | 7. Indiana State |
| 3. Illinois State | 8. Southern Illinois |
| 4. Wichita State | 9. Drake |
| 5. Bradley | 10. Northern Iowa |

ALL-MVC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	RODNEY BUFORD, Creighton	6-5/195	Sr.
F/C	DANNY MOORE, SW Missouri	6-10/243	Sr.
C	LEROY WATKINS, Illinois State	6-7/265	Sr.
G	ROB DYE, Bradley	6-1/190	Jr.
G	MARCUS WILSON, Evansville	6-3/189	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	L. DEE MURDOCK, Illinois State	6-9/230	Jr.
C	DOUG SWENSON, Creighton	6-10/210	Sr.
F	CHRIS THUNELL, Southern Illinois	6-9/227	Jr.
G	KEVIN AULT, SW Missouri	6-3/196	Jr.
G	MAURICE EVANS, Wichita State	6-5/218	Soph.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

RODNEY BUFORD, F, Creighton



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

L. DEE MURDOCK, F, Illinois State

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter:** Marcus Wilson, Evansville.
Best rebounder: Chris Thunell, Southern Illinois.
Best playmaker: William Fontleroy, SW Missouri.
Best defender: Carl Lemons, Wichita State.
Best leaper: Rodney Buford, Creighton.
Most versatile: Nate Green, Indiana State.
Most flamboyant: Rodney Buford, Creighton.
Best NBA prospect: Rodney Buford, Creighton.



1. CREIGHTON

Frontcourt: This is one of the deepest front lines in the Valley. Seven lettermen return, including multitalented small forward Rodney Buford and ever-improving center Doug Swenson. Buford, who enters the season as the league's leading returning career scorer (1,540 points), led the conference in scoring last season and was seventh in rebounding. No wonder he made the all-league team for the second consecutive year. Swenson moves into the starting center position after being voted the league's top reserve a year ago. Alan Huss, who missed last season with an injury, and JC transfer Donnie Johnson will back up Swenson. Matt West, one of the better 3-point shooters in the league, is a capable backup for Buford and also can play off-guard. Contenders for the other starting forward spot are Cliff Bates, Justin Haynes and the first foreign player in school history, JC transfer Nerijus Karlikanovas.

Backcourt: The Bluejays may have the best three-guard combo in the league. Playmaker Ryan Sears, voted the conference's top freshman last season, leads the trio. He was third in the league in assists and steals, and became the first point guard in Creighton's storied history to finish a season with more steals than turnovers. He will get ample support from running mates Ben Walker, a fellow sophomore, and Corie Brandon. Walker led the Bluejays in offensive rebounding from his guard position, while Brandon is a tremendous perimeter shooter and has the quickness to penetrate to the basket.

Key to success: The Bluejays must do a better job of defending in the halfcourt.

Outlook: Coach Dana Altman has done a good job with this program, and with the return of 13 lettermen (87 percent of the scoring and 79.4 percent of the rebounding) from last year's NIT team, Creighton definitely has enough ammunition to win its first league title since 1990-91.

Bluejays Data

Coach: Dana Altman (54-59, 4 years; 137-126 overall, 9 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 18-10. MVC: 12-6/2nd. Lost to Marquette in NIT first round.

Starters lost (2): Kevin Mungin, F (5.5 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 1.1 bpg, 18.3 mpg); Joel Templeman, C (4.3 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 65.4 FG%, 19.9 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Chestnut, G (4.0 ppg, 11.0 mpg; transfer/Central Oklahoma).

Starters returning (3): Rodney Buford, F, 6-5/Sr. (18.9 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 1.5 spg, 30.9 mpg); Ryan Sears, G, 6-0/Soph. (10.5 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 80.5 FT%, 39.1 3-pt%, 4.8 apg, 2.2 spg, 32.2 mpg); Ben Walker, G, 6-2/Soph. (5.6 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 40.7 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 19.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Cliff Bates, F, 6-4/Sr.; Corie Brandon, G, 6-0/Sr. (7.2 ppg, 40.6 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 20.3 mpg); Justin Haynes, F, 6-4/Soph. (5.0 ppg, 52.0 FG%, 16.9 mpg); Alan Huss, C, 6-9/Soph. (RS/knee); Doug Swenson, C, 6-10/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 53.0 FG%, 2.0 bpg, 20.0 mpg); Matt West, F, 6-4/Jr. (4.6 ppg, 81.0 FT%, 42.3 3-pt%, 17.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: Donnie Johnson, C, 6-7/Jr.



Fontleroy is a key component of what should be a top-notch Southwest Missouri backcourt.

(JC/RS/back); Nerijus Karlikanovas, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1991.

Last NCAA appearance: 1991.

Site: Omaha, Neb. **Home court:** Omaha Civic Auditorium (9,493).

2. SW MISSOURI

Frontcourt: Much as it has the past two seasons, the inside game will revolve around Danny Moore. He didn't quite put up the scoring and rebounding numbers last season that he did his first season, but he still was good enough to lead the Bears in both categories. Moore's increased ability to hit the outside shot and get to the foul line proved invaluable. Look for Ken Stringer to be more of a force at both ends of the floor and take up some of the leadership responsibilities left by the graduation of Ben Kandlbinder. Butch Tshomba and Paul Murans should see

increased playing time, and JC transfer Ron Bruton will fit into the mix. Matt Rueter and freshman Scott Brakebill will battle for time at forward. Freshman Brian George will look to learn from Moore.

Backcourt: This is one area coach Steve Alford should feel good about, as lettermen Kevin Ault, William Fontleroy and Ryan Bettenhausen return. Ault, a deadly shooter from anywhere on the court, finished fourth in the nation in free-throw percentage (90 percent) last year. Fontleroy, one of the top assists men in the league, has started 52 of his 65 career games at SMS. Bettenhausen, who provides leadership and a spark off the bench, has played in all 93 games that Alford has coached the team. Newcomers in the backcourt vying for time will be JC transfers Allen Phillips and Eric Judd, along with freshman Brandon Miller.

Key to success: While Southwest has a veteran team (10 upperclassmen among its 14 players), it is necessary for the newcomers to blend in to give the Bears the flexibility and versatility lacking last season.

Outlook: The Bears won't possess the size of last year's team, but they appear to have enough experience (four starters and eight lettermen) and a speedier collection of players. They'll contend for the Valley title and will return to the postseason after a one-year absence.

Bears Data

Coach: Steve Alford (56-37, 3 years; 134-66 overall, 7 years).

1997-98 record: 16-16. MVC: 11-7/T3rd.

Starters lost (1): Ben Kandlbinder, F (12.9 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 47.2 FG%, 72.7 FT%, 1.2 spg, 27.7 mpg).

Others lost: Billy Coby, C (decided to play football); Omar Lincoln, F; John Paul Nelson, C (5.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 55.5 FG%, 17.7 mpg; gave up final year of eligibility).

Starters returning (4): Kevin Ault, G, 6-3/Jr. (14.8 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 90.0 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 31.8 mpg);

William Fontleroy, G, 6-3/Jr. (7.5 ppg, 4.2 apg, 1.4 spg, 26.9 mpg); Danny Moore, C/F, 6-10/Sr. (15.7 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 53.1 FG%, 83.6 FT%, 1.0 bpg, 27.8 mpg); Ken Stringer, F, 6-4/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 27.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Ryan Bettenhausen, G, 6-1/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 85.7 FT%, 3.5 apg, 23.2 mpg); Paul Murans, F, 6-6/Sr.; Matt Rueter, F, 6-8/Soph.; Butch Tshomba, F, 6-6/Sr. (9.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Scott Brakebill, F, 6-8/Fr.; Ron Bruton, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Brian George, C, 6-10/Fr.; Eric Judd, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Brandon Miller, G, 6-0/Fr.; Allen Phillips, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1990 (Mid-Continent).

Last NCAA appearance: 1992.

Site: Springfield, Mo. **Home court:** Hammons Center (8,846).

3. ILLINOIS STATE

Frontcourt: The sudden decision by junior Rico Hill, last year's league MVP, to turn pro over the summer (but after the NBA draft, which means he can't play in that league this season) was offset somewhat by the announcement that bulky center LeRoy Watkins had gained another year of eligibility. Watkins entered college as a Prop 48, but graduated in four years, which means he regains the year he lost. He'll be counted on heavily, as none of the other returning big men saw much playing time in key situations. While the group of Kenneth Pierson, Ronald vanVelzen, Ryan Crowley and Joe Hein will get opportunities early, look for the spotlight to be on Division I transfers L. Dee Murdock (Missouri) and Sean Riley (North Texas). Murdock should step in at power forward, but he has shown he can score from beyond the 3-point arc, too. Riley, the school's first 7-footer in eight years, will be counted on as a back-up to Watkins. If he's healthy, Pierson (knee) will get time at small forward. vanVelzen, a native of the Netherlands, has shown improvement in the offseason. JC transfer Tyrone Brown will compete at small forward; he's considered a good defender and a guy who can take the ball to the hoop.

Backcourt: Kyle Cartmill is the lone returnee with any amount of playing experience. Cartmill, who is explosively quick and athletic, averaged about 20 minutes of playing time and proved to be a vital part of the

guard rotation late in the season. Tarise Bryson, who sat out last season under Prop 48, should get plenty of time at the off-guard position with Cartmill. Coach Kevin Stallings claims Bryson is one of the better shooters he has coached. Two freshmen, Victor Williams and Eric Bush, will vie at point guard. Williams was the player of the year in Kansas last season. Bush also can play off-guard, and Cartmill proved last year he can play the point if needed.

Keys to success: The ability of first-year players Williams, Bush and Bryson to step in and be productive. In addition, Murdock and Riley need to provide leadership among the frontcourt players.

Outlook: No doubt the Redbirds will be youthful, as the top seven players from last year's NCAA team are gone. But Stallings has shown the ability to mold young teams into conference contenders in the past, and this year should be no exception.

Redbirds Data

Coach: Kevin Stallings (107-47, 5 years; 1-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 25-6. MVC: 16-2/1st. Lost to Arizona in NCAA West second round.

Starters lost (4): Rico Hill, F (18.4 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 51.2 FG%, 49.5 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 28.9 mpg; turned pro); Dan Muller, F (13.0 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 40.2 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 34.5 mpg); Skipp Schaeffbauer, G (8.6 ppg, 35.9 3-pt%, 3.1 apg, 1.2 spg, 26.8 mpg); Jamar Smiley, G (7.3 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 6.4 apg, 1.3 spg, 26.1 mpg).

Others lost: Rob Gibbons, C (5.9 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 62.5 FG%, 15.9 mpg); Steve Hansell, G (5.9 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 47.7 FG%, 73.2 FT%, 1.1 spg, 24.2 mpg).

Starters returning (1): LeRoy Watkins, C, 6-7/Sr. (10.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 55.6 FG%, 22.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Kyle Cartmill, G, 6-0/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 47.3 FG%, 78.8 FT%, 40.2 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 20.4 mpg); Ryan Crowley, F, 6-5/Jr.; Joe Hein, F, 6-7/Jr.; Kenneth Pierson, F, 6-8/Sr.; Nic Stotter, G, 6-0/Jr.; Ronald vanVelzen, C, 6-10/Sr.

Top newcomers: Tyrone Brown, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Tarise Bryson, G, 6-2/Soph. (Prop 48); Eric Bush, G, 5-11/Fr.; Shawn Jeppson, G, 6-2/Fr.; L. Dee Murdock, F, 6-9/Jr. (transfer/Missouri); Sean Riley, C, 7-0/Jr. (transfer/North Texas); Victor Williams, G, 5-10/Fr.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Normal, Ill. **Home court:** Redbird Arena (10,200).

4. WICHITA STATE

Frontcourt: A pair of Wichita high school standouts will be expected to carry the load up front for the Shockers again this season. Forward Darrin Williams and swingman Maurice Evans were instrumental in the Shockers recording their first winning record in the Valley in nine years. Evans, a member of the league's all-newcomer team, demonstrated his potential in the last four games by averaging 20 points. Speaking of newcomers, the Shockers will be relying on three rookies to strengthen their inside game. Sophomore Troy Mack, who sat out last season as a Prop 48, is expected to add offense and rebounding. Also, two freshmen from the Netherlands, Bart Westgeest and Mahnovd Martina, come to town with impressive numbers. Westgeest averaged a whopping 17 rebounds and 23 points, and Martina scored 23 points and hauled in 11 rebounds for their junior club teams last season.

James Bunch continues to improve and could be a key contributor at center.

Backcourt: Jason Perez, a steady performer his first two seasons, once again will provide the leadership and scoring punch. Perez, Wichita State's leading scorer last year, also came up with a team-high 62 steals, missing the school record by one. Carl Lemons, who came on late in the year, will get the first opportunity to replace Terry Hankton at point guard. Freshmen Jay Lewis and Terrell Benton will provide depth at the point and could see increased playing time as the season progresses.

Key to success: The Shockers, who ranked near the bottom of the league in offense, desperately need to get more scoring from their inside players.

Outlook: Coach Randy Smithson believes he addressed his team's two biggest needs by getting inside players who can provide scoring punch and enough rebounding to allow the Shockers to employ more of a transition game. If the young players produce, this will be a solid upper-division team.

Shockers Data

Coach: Randy Smithson (30-28, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 16-15. MVC: 11-7/T3rd.

Starters lost (2): Terry Hankton, G (9.3 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 77.5 FT%, 4.0 apg, 1.7 spg, 31.8 mpg); Roosevelt Overstreet, F (4.9 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 22.3 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Grill, G/F (7.7 ppg, 75.0 FT%, 1.1 spg, 22.7 mpg); Ty Rhodes, G (4.0 ppg, 18.7 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Maurice Evans, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (12.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 24.5 mpg); Jason Perez, G, 6-4/Jr. (13.5 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 74.0 FG%, 2.0 spg, 32.9 mpg); Darrin Williams, F, 6-8/Jr. (6.7 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 46.9 FG%, 20.6 mpg).

Other returnees: James Bunch, F, 6-9/Sr.; Carl Lemons, G, 6-3/Jr. (14.0 mpg); Luke Utting, F, 6-7/Sr.

Top newcomers: Terrell Benton, G, 6-5/Fr.; Kurt Flowers, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS/back); Jay Lewis, G, 6-1/Fr.; Troy Mack, F, 6-8/Soph. (Prop 48); Mahnovd Martina, F, 6-10/Fr.; Mike Watkins, F, 6-8/Fr.; Bart Westgeest, F, 6-9/Fr.

Last league title: 1983.

Last NCAA appearance: 1988.

Site: Wichita, Kan. **Home court:** Levitt Arena (10,529).

5. BRADLEY

Frontcourt: This is the biggest area of concern for the Braves as they try to fill the void left by the graduation of big man Adebayo Akinkunle, the league's Defensive Player of the Year and Bradley's leading scorer and rebounder. Aba Koita and Matthew Lee are the likely candidates at center, but neither played much last year. The Braves are in better shape at forward, where starters Ed Cage and Fred Atkins return. Gavin Schairer, the team's lone senior scholarship player, also can play on the perimeter. Matt Moran, who missed a great deal of last season with an injury, figures to get ample playing time at forward. Moran, who appears to be more comfortable playing with his back to the basket, also could see time in the post position. Freshman Milo Kirsch, the Braves' lone recruit, should see time at forward or center.

Backcourt: This will be the Braves'

strength with the return of starters Eric Roberson and Rob Dye. The duo gives Bradley one of the best backcourts in the league. Roberson was a member of the league's all-defensive team and led the Valley in steals. Dye was inconsistent but was the team's second-leading scorer, and figures to be more of an offensive threat this year. Jerome Robinson and Reggie Hall give the Braves quality depth.

Keys to success: How well the front-court players develop and how much the backcourt players continue to improve will go a long way in determining what type of season Bradley fans can expect.

Outlook: One thing that's a given is that the Braves always will be one of the league's top defensive teams with Jim Molinari as coach. That alone makes the Braves a threat in the conference race, no matter where they are picked.

Braves Data

Coach: Jim Molinari (115-92, 7 years; 157-109 overall, 9 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-14. MVC: 9-9/T6th.

Starters lost (1): Adebayo Akinkunle, C (15.4 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 73.9 FT%, 1.0 spg, 1.9 bpg, 33.3 mpg).

Others lost: Michael Collins, G/F (12.1 mpg; transfer/Wheaton).

Starters returning (4): Fred Atkins, F, 6-6/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 73.3 FT%, 17.9 mpg); Ed Cage, F, 6-7/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 80.4 FT%, 25.3 mpg); Rob Dye, G, 6-1/Jr. (12.5 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 72.0 FT%, 38.8 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 1.3 spg, 35.1 mpg); Eric Roberson, G, 6-4/Jr. (8.2 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 52.0 FG%, 3.6 apg, 2.4 spg, 31.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Aba Koita, C, 6-9/Jr. (9.8 mpg); Matthew Lee, F/C, 6-8/Jr.; Matt Moran, F, 6-7/Jr. (4.1 ppg, 13.6 mpg); Jerome Robinson, G, 6-3/Soph. (13.9 mpg); Gavin Schairer, F, 6-7/Sr. (5.1 ppg, 81.8 FT%, 43.2 3-pt%, 14.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Reggie Hall, G/F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48); Milo Kirsch, F/C, 6-7/Fr.

Last league title: 1996.

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Peoria, Ill. **Home court:** Carver Arena (10,825).

6. EVANSVILLE

Frontcourt: Craig Snow is being counted on to pick up the slack left by the graduation of all-conference forward Chris Hollender, who was the Purple Aces' most productive inside player. Hollender's presence last year actually forced Snow to play a little more on the perimeter. This season, Snow will move back inside, where he is more comfortable, and his production should increase. Kwame James, who will be playing only his fifth year of organized basketball, continues to improve and will battle JC transfer Matt Vidoni for playing time in the post. Three-year letterman Curt Begle figures to get time at forward along with freshman Charles Hedde and Zack Anderson. Kyle Runyan, who was the Aces' third leading scorer despite starting just nine games, could fill the small forward spot or play off-guard.

Backcourt: The Aces appear well-stocked here as Marcus Wilson, among the more underrated players in the league, returns for his senior season. Wilson, an all-league performer in '97-98 who finished

third in the conference in scoring, is on track to finish second in school history in scoring. Wilson is the league's top returning 3-point marksman and was among the nation's leaders in free-throw percentage. Returning starter Jeremy Stanton surprised everyone but the Evansville staff with his ability at point guard. Stanton, who needs to step up his offense, finished fourth in the league in assists. Josh Robinson and freshmen Adam Seitz and Clint Keown, both outstanding scorers in high school, are being counted on to balance out this position.

Keys to success: The Aces need someone to score as consistently as Hollender so teams can't stack their defenses to stop Wilson. In addition, Vidoni and James are going to have to become a force in the middle by playing defense and rebounding.

Outlook: With eight of their top nine players back and a recruiting class that should provide more offensive firepower, the Purple Aces have the talent to challenge for an upper-division finish. But if Wilson must carry the load alone, the Aces are destined for a middle-of-the-pack finish.

Purple Aces Data

Coach: Jim Crews (232-150, 13 years; 1-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-15. MVC: 9-9/T6th.

Starters lost (1): Chris Hollender, F (16.5 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 54.8 FG%, 85.3 FT%, 39.1 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 33.6 mpg).

Others lost: Brian Bisges, F (transfer); Ryan Robertson, G (transfer).

Starters returning (4): Kwame James, C, 6-8/Jr. (7.1 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 53.6 FG%, 21.9 mpg); Craig Snow, F, 6-7/Soph. (6.5 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 71.0 FT%, 22.3 mpg); Jeremy Stanton, G, 6-1/Soph. (4.0 ppg, 36.8 3-pt%, 4.6 apg, 30.4 mpg); Marcus Wilson, G, 6-3/Sr. (18.3 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 86.7 FT%, 44.1 3-pt%, 36.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Zack Anderson, C/F, 6-10/Soph.; Curt Begle, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (50.0 FG%, 41.7 3-pt%, 14.5 mpg); Josh Robinson, G, 6-2/Soph. (14.4 mpg); Kyle Runyan, F/G, 6-5/Soph. (10.8 ppg, 74.2 FT%, 43.0 3-pt%, 24.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Charles Hedde, F/C, 6-8/Fr.; Clint Keown, G, 6-2/Fr.; Adam Seitz, G, 6-3/Fr.; Matt Vidoni, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1993 (tie, Midwestern Collegiate).

Last NCAA appearance: 1993.

Site: Evansville, Ind. **Home court:** Roberts Stadium (12,300).

7. INDIANA STATE

Frontcourt: The Sycamores probably won't play with a true post player, so second-year coach Royce Waltman will count on a number of players to fill the rotation and help make up for the loss of starters Steve Hart and Jayson Wells, the latter an all-league player and ISU's leading scorer and rebounder. Heading the list of candidates is returning starter Matt Renn, one of the more versatile players on the team. He has a knack for playing with reckless abandon. Freshman Djibril Kante easily could crack the starting lineup. Jon Luchetti, Ben Anderson (one of the more physical Sycamores) and Brian Giesen also will get plenty of opportunity to start and should provide depth. JC transfer Abasi Thompson and Chad Hunter, who sat out last season under Prop 48, could split time

between forward and guard. Thompson, a good athlete, showed in junior college that he can supply scoring and rebounding.

Backcourt: The return of starters Nate Green and Michael Menser gives the Sycamores a solid nucleus to build around. Green, who has been rated by more than one coach in the league as one of the MVC's more versatile players, was third in assists and blocks and fourth in steals in the conference last season. He also is a slashing penetrator with exceptional ballhandling skills, which allows him to play point guard if necessary. Point man Menser was everything Waltman thought he would be last season as a freshman. He was named to the Valley Newcomer team after finishing as the Sycamores' third-leading scorer and second-leading assist man. Chad Adkins, the Sycamores' 3-point specialist, and freshmen Kelyn Block and Andy Williamson figure to play valuable roles in the rotation.

Key to success: The Sycamores were one of the best defensive teams in the league last season, limiting opponents to 66.6 points, but they were near the bottom in scoring (69.4). They need someone to pick up the slack left by the graduations of Wells and Hart.

Outlook: After enjoying their first winning season in 18 years, things are looking up for the Sycamores. Waltman built a solid foundation in his first year, but the Sycamores still appear to be a year or two away from being an upper-division team.

Sycamores Data

Coach: Royce Waltman (16-11, 1 year; 205-97 overall, 11 years).

1997-98 record: 16-11. MVC: 10-8/5th.

Starters lost (2): Steve Hart, G (12.9 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 76.3 FT%, 1.6 spg, 32.1 mpg); Jayson Wells, F (16.7 ppg, 8.4 rpg, 53.0 FG%, 75.5 FT%, 32.8 mpg).

Others lost: Matt McCarty, G; Darin Raper, G; Billy Spraul, C (46.8 FG%, 11.6 mpg) (transfer/Merrimack).

Starters returning (3): Nate Green, G, 6-5/Jr. (8.1 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 4.9 apg, 1.3 bpg, 2.1 spg, 32.3 mpg); Michael Menser, G, 5-11/Soph. (10.5 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 78.6 FT%, 35.9 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 32.3 mpg); Matt Renn, F, 6-6/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 75.0 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 23.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Chad Adkins, G, 6-2/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 84.0 FT%, 37.3 3-pt%, 20.0 mpg); Ben Anderson, C, 6-6/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 10.9 mpg); Brian Giesen, F, 6-9/Soph.; Jon Luchetti, F, 6-8/Sr.

Top newcomers: Kelyn Block, G, 6-2/Fr.; Chad Hunter, G/F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48); Djibril Kante, F, 6-7/Fr.; Abasi Thompson, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Andy Williamson, G, 6-5/Fr.

Last league title: 1979.

Last NCAA appearance: 1979.

Site: Terre Haute, Ind. **Home court:** Hulman Center (10,206).

8. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

Frontcourt: First-year coach Bruce Weber, a longtime assistant at Purdue, inherited a solid nucleus of frontcourt players. Chris Thunell, the Valley's Newcomer of the Year and rebounding champ last season, heads a seasoned group of veterans. Thunell, who also scored in double figures, will play

power forward, with James Jackson helping. James Watts and Derrick Tilmon should provide ample support in the post. Monte Jenkins should start at small forward. Jenkins, who has started 56 of SIU's past 60 games, should prosper this season with the departure of Rashad Tucker. Joshua Cross figures to back up Jenkins.

Backcourt: The Salukis must make up for the loss of sharpshooter Shane Hawkins, a four-year starter who became the Valley's career leader in 3-point field goals last season. JC transfer Gianandrea Marcaccini is expected to take up some of the scoring slack at off-guard. Holdovers Lance Brown and Abel Schrader also will compete for playing time behind Marcaccini. Weber's first recruit, JC transfer Ricky Collum, should be the point guard. Collum averaged nearly five assists per game at Kankakee (Ill.) CC. Freshman Brandon Mells should prove to be an adequate backup for Collum.

Keys to success: The Salukis were first in the league in rebounding and third in offense but last in defense, and it cost 13-year coach Rich Herrin his job. It is no secret that defense, and how well the Salukis adjust to Weber's system, will determine what type of season they will have.

Outlook: After spending 18 years as an assistant to Gene Keady at Purdue, Weber gets to call his own shots. He got a late start in the recruiting process but appears to have landed a couple of quality guards in Marcaccini and Collum. The Salukis' front line is good enough to keep them in games and possibly help SIU knock off some of the league's top teams.

Salukis Data

Coach: Bruce Weber (first year).

1997-98 record: 14-16. MVC: 8-10/8th.

Starters lost (2): Shane Hawkins, G (14.2 ppg, 73.9 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 3.5 apg, 1.0 spg, 32.5 mpg); Rashad Tucker, F (15.8 ppg, 7.8 rpg, 73.4 FT%, 3.5 apg, 1.6 spg, 33.7 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (3): Monte Jenkins, F/G, 6-4/Sr. (13.6 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 36.0 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 32.2 mpg); Chris Thunell, F, 6-9/Jr. (12.6 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 86.9 FT%, 43.3 3-pt%, 32.7 mpg); Derrick Tilmon, C/F, 6-7/Jr. (6.3 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 55.4 FG%, 1.0 spg, 20.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Lance Brown, G, 6-3/Jr.; Joshua Cross, G, 6-4/Soph. (56.5 FG%, 9.1 mpg); Ryan Hammer, G, 6-1/Sr.; James Jackson, F/C, 6-6/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 15.5 mpg); Abel Schrader, G, 6-4/Soph.; James Watts, F/C, 6-8/Sr. (3.8 rpg, 14.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Ricky Collum, G, 5-11/Jr. (JC); Gianandrea Marcaccini, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Brandon Mells, G, 6-1/Fr.

Last league title: 1994 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Carbondale, Ill. **Home court:** SIU Arena (10,014).

9. DRAKE

Frontcourt: Joey Gaw is the lone returning starter up front, but third-year coach Kurt Kanaskie is counting on two JC transfers to add scoring and rebounding power. Aaron Deeter gives the Bulldogs some bulk at center, a missing ingredient the past few years. Meanwhile, fellow JC import Dontay Harris will take over at power forward, allowing Gaw



Brus needs a good season for Northern Iowa to have any chance at a winning record.

to return to his more natural position of small forward. Myron Richardson, who came on strong at the end of last season, could challenge for a starting spot. Brandon Donaldson and Justin Ohl should provide depth.

Backcourt: Matt Woodley and Armand LeVasseur return for another season after starting side-by-side the majority of the time last year. Woodley made an impact in his first campaign with the Bulldogs by finishing sixth in assists and second in steals in the Valley. Newcomers Abdul Collier, a JC transfer, and freshmen Jonathan Anderson and Kareem Lee should challenge for time.

Keys to success: Rebounding and poor post play were the downfalls last season for the Bulldogs, who lost their final 20 games, including all 18 league games for the second year in a row. They have to make improvements in both areas to escape the cellar for the third consecutive year.

Outlook: Kanaskie, who came to Drake two years ago with a career coaching record 100 games above .500, is 45 games under in his first two seasons on the job. He put an emphasis on recruiting inside players who are more athletic and more offensive-minded. He appears to have done that, but the Bulldogs still have a long way to go before they can even think about moving up very far in the standings.

Bulldogs Data

Coach: Kurt Kanaskie (5-50, 2 years; 212-157 overall, 13 years).

1997-98 record: 3-24. MVC: 0-18/10th.

Starters lost (2): Andy Pawlowski, C (12.3 mpg);

Rashaad Thomas, F (9.8 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 27.3 mpg).

Others lost: Kory Petzenhauser, G (4.0 ppg, 42.2 3-pt%, 20.6 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Joey Gaw, F, 6-8/Soph. (9.8 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 76.7 FT%, 24.9 mpg); Armand LeVasseur, G, 6-2/Jr. (10.9 ppg, 70.0 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 29.5

mpg); Matt Woodley, G, 5-11/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 77.4 FT%, 33.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Brandon Donaldson, C, 6-10/Soph. (11.0 mpg); Justin Ohl, F, 6-6/Soph. (10.3 mpg); Myron Richardson, F, 6-7/Jr. (7.5 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 1.3 spg, 17.5 mpg); Aaron Thomas, G, 6-4/Soph. (15.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jonathan Anderson, G, 6-4/Fr.; Abdul Collier, G, 6-5/Soph. (JC); Aaron Deeter, C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Dontay Harris, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Kareem Lee, G, 6-1/Fr.

Last league title: 1971.

Last NCAA appearance: 1971.

Site: Des Moines, Iowa. **Home court:** Knapp Center (7,002).

10. N. IOWA

Frontcourt: First-year coach Sam Weaver will build the Panthers' inside game around 7-footer Tyler Peterson and power forward Cory Jenkins. Peterson, who began his career at Iowa State (where Weaver was an assistant), played a limited role last season but made significant strides in the offseason. Jenkins, the team's most versatile player, needs to provide more scoring and rebounding. Tyjuan Finley and Joe Breakenridge will battle for playing time at small forward. Burt Lappe will share time with Peterson in the post and could see action at power forward.

Backcourt: Terry Cress and Tony Brus have the most experience. Both started at times last season and need to step up their games if the Panthers are to improve. Cress will get every opportunity to start at point guard, but he'll be pushed by freshman Murphy Carter. Brus, whose aggressive playing style can irritate opponents, likely will battle JC transfer Terry Rouse for the starting job at off-guard. Freshman Marius Boyd also is expected to contribute.

Keys to success: How quickly the Panthers embrace and accept Weaver's system will be vital. In addition, they must be improved at the defensive end and on the boards.

Outlook: The Panthers were the most disappointing team in the league last year. Picked to finish in the middle of the pack, they finished ninth. Weaver, who takes over for Eldon Miller after 12 years, has a lot of work ahead of him. Before his job at Iowa State, Weaver was coach for three seasons at Alcorn State.

Panthers Data

Coach: Sam Weaver (first year; 20-60 overall, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 10-17. MVC: 4-14/9th.

Starters lost (2): Chris Burdine, C (9.1 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 24.4 mpg); Darian DeVries, G (12.6 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 77.9 FT%, 44.0 3-pt%, 3.1 apg, 1.3 spg, 28.3 mpg).

Others lost: Sean Hawkins, F (3.6 rpg, 1.2 bpg, 12.6 mpg); Brian Heying, F (5.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 20.8 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Terry Cress, G, 6-2/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 1.1 spg, 26.6 mpg); Tyjuan Finley, F/G, 6-5/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 1.0 spg, 23.0 mpg); Cory Jenkins, F/G, 6-8/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 20.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Joe Breakenridge, F, 6-6/Soph.; Tony Brus, G, 6-0/Sr. (15.4 ppg, 71.7 FT%, 1.3 spg, 27.3 mpg); Burt Lappe, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (5.8 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 15.1 mpg); Tyler Peterson, C, 7-0/Jr. (10.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Marius Boyd, G, 6-1/Fr.; Murphy Carter, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Brian Lubeck, F, 6-6/Fr. (RS); Aaron Middendorf, G, 6-6/Fr. (RS); Terry Rouse, G, 6-6/Jr. (JC).

Last league title: 1991 (Mid-Continent).

Last NCAA appearance: 1990.

Site: Cedar Falls, Iowa. **Home court:** UNI-Dome (10,000).

TSN

EAST DIVISION

1. MIAMI (OHIO)

Coach: Charlie Coles (38-21, 2 years; 130-105 overall, 8 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-12. MAC East: 9-9/T2nd.

Starters lost: None. **Others lost:** None.

Starters returning (5): John Estlick, F, 6-7/Sr. (8.1 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 56.3 FG%, 30.3 mpg); Damon Frierson, G, 6-4/Sr. (18.8 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 76.9 FT%, 4.1 apg, 1.5 spg, 38.3 mpg); Refiloe Lethunya, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (5.3 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 22.8 mpg); Wally Szczerbiak, F, 6-8/Sr. (24.4 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 80.6 FT%, 49.2 3-pt%, 1.1 bpg, 38.2 mpg); Anthony Taylor, G, 6-2/Jr. (12.4 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 72.2 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 36.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Rich Allendorf, C, 6-10/Soph.; Mike Ensminger, F/C, 6-8/Soph. (4.4 rpg, 76.5 FT%, 23.5 mpg); Jay Locklier, F/C, 6-11/Soph. (12.2 mpg); Rob Mestas, G, 5-11/Jr. (RS/knee).

Top newcomers: Brian Edwards, F, 6-7/Soph. (Prop 48); Jason Grunkemeyer, G, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Ohio); Ben Helmers, G, 6-2/Fr.; Jason Stewart, G/F, 6-6/Jr. (transfer/Furman).

Strengths: The RedHawks return all five starters and all but 47 of their points from last year. In Wally Szczerbiak and Damon Frierson, Miami has the best 1-2 punch in the conference. Szczerbiak played on the U.S. team in the Goodwill Games and is one of the best forwards in the nation.

Weaknesses: The RedHawks are looking for players to take some of the load off Szczerbiak and Frierson, who often are double-teamed. If Anthony Taylor becomes more consistent, Miami should be poised for a great season.

Outlook: Injuries are the only thing that could stop the RedHawks, and that was their problem last year. Starting point guard Rob Mestas missed the season with a knee injury and Szczerbiak was sidelined eight games with a broken wrist. Everybody is healthy now, and that bodes well. Best of all, coach Charlie Coles, who suffered a heart attack during last year's MAC tourney, appears ready for action.

Last league title: 1997 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997. **Site:** Oxford, Ohio. **Home court:** Millett Hall (9,200).

2. AKRON

Coach: Dan Hipsher (28-51, 3 years; 154-96 overall, 9 years).

1997-98 record: 17-10. MAC East: 13-5/1st.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Scott Gooden, G (8.5 ppg, 48.0 FG%, 81.8 FT%, 38.9 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 20.5 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Ryan Andrick, F, 6-7/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 56.5 FG%, 72.7 FT%, 2.4 mpg); Jimmal Ball, G, 5-10/Jr. (14.7 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 3.4 apg, 2.4 spg, 33.6 mpg); Jami Bosley, G, 6-0/Jr. (16.3 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 79.2 FT%, 2.7 spg, 31.6 mpg); George Phillips, F, 6-6/Sr. (12.4 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 1.6 bpg, 33.4 mpg); Bruce Weinke, C, 6-11/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 50.9 FG%, 20.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Adam Benton, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.8 mpg); Ali Kart, G, 6-3/Jr.; Jawanza Moore, F, 6-5/Sr. (6.1 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 1.0 spg, 20.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: David Falknor, F, 6-7/Fr.; Cornell Felton, G, 6-0/Fr.; Kirene Johnson, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Antwain Lavender, G, 5-7/Fr.; Nate Schindewolf, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (transfer/Miami of Ohio).

Strengths: The Zips have all five starters back, headed by Jimmal Ball and Jami Bosley. Toss in George Phillips, and Akron has one of the best trios of starters in the conference. Bosley's aggressiveness and bulk make him a tough matchup for most MAC teams, and Ball is among the quickest players in the conference.

Weaknesses: Akron must shoot better from the perimeter. Ball and Bosley combined to make less than 30 percent of their 3-point shots last season. The Zips also need improvement on the boards from Bruce Weinke.

Outlook: The Zips were one of the bottom-feeders when they entered the MAC in 1992-93. They went 15-75 in conference games before breaking out with a 13-5 record to win the East last year. They'll continue to climb this year but fall just short of Miami in the division race.

Last league title: 1998 (East). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1986. **Site:** Akron, Ohio. **Home court:** Rhodes Arena (5,942).

3. MARSHALL

Coach: Greg White (31-25, 2 years; 150-179 overall, 12 years).

1997-98 record: 11-16. MAC East: 7-11/T4th.

Starters lost: None. **Others lost:** Chris Gray, G; Jesse Jett, G. **Starters returning (5):** Joda Burgess, G, 6-6/Soph. (10.3 ppg, 95.7 FT%, 28.2 mpg); Carlton King, F, 6-5/Sr. (13.7 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 74.0 FT%, 37.2 3-pt%, 30.1 mpg); Terrell McKelvey, C,

6-8/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 51.1 FG%, 27.0 mpg); Derrick Wright, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.2 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 52.0 FG%, 27.3 mpg); Travis Young, G, 6-1/Soph. (11.3 ppg, 74.0 FT%, 4.3 apg, 1.6 spg, 32.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Vince Carafelli, C, 6-9/Sr. (49.2 FG%, 78.8 FT%, 10.6 mpg); Deon Dobbs, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (9.1 ppg, 48.8 FG%, 71.7 FT%, 35.1 3-pt%, 19.7 mpg); Brian Faulkner, G, 6-3/Jr.; VonDale Morton, F, 6-6/Sr. (5.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 16.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Cornelius Jackson, G, 6-4/Soph. (transfer/Tennessee); Edwin Johnson, F, 6-8/Fr.; Josh Perkey, F, 6-7/Soph.; Tamar Slay, G, 6-7/Fr.; J.R. VanHoose, F/C, 6-9/Fr.; Sean Weller, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: The Thundering Herd have a solid guard tandem in Travis Young and Joda Burgess. They played so well that Deon Dobbs couldn't regain his starting job after missing a month with an injury. Leading scorer Carlton King is one of the most athletic players in the league.

Weaknesses: Marshall played more with finesse than strength in its first year in the MAC. Coach Greg White has vowed his players will become stronger this season.

Outlook: Marshall has all five starters returning and should get a major boost from J.R. VanHoose, the top incoming freshman in the conference and the Kentucky High School Player of the Year in 1997-98. The Herd should get better this year, but it's crowded at the top of this division.

Last league title: 1995 (Southern).

Last NCAA appearance: 1988.

Site: Huntington, W.Va. **Home court:** Henderson Center (9,043).

4. OHIO

Coach: Larry Hunter (147-114, 9 years; 452-190 overall, 22 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 5-21. MAC East: 3-15/6th.

Starters lost (2): Basra Fakhir, F (8.4 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 28.5 mpg); Jim Peterson, F (10.9 ppg, 75.0 FT%, 28.2 mpg).

Others lost: Seth Martin, F (4.5 ppg, 50.5 FG%, 17.5 mpg) (transfer/California, Pa.).

Starters returning (3): Sanjay Adell, G, 6-6/Jr. (16.1 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 31.6 mpg); Diante Flenorl, F, 6-8/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 32.8 mpg); Dustin Ford, G, 5-10/Soph. (8.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 78.5 FT%, 3.3 apg, 1.2 spg, 33.2 mpg).

Other returnees: None.

Top newcomers: Jason Crawford, G, 6-5/Fr.; Patrick Flomo, F, 6-8/Fr.; Asa Jewett, C, 6-10/Fr.; Shaun Stonerook, F, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/Ohio State); Jeremy Thrapp, F, 6-4/Soph. (Prop 48); LaDrell Whitehead, G, 5-9/Sr. (transfer/Wyoming).

Strengths: LaDrell Whitehead is a potent scorer and a quality defender. Ohio has a nice problem in deciding where to play Sanjay Adell. He was tough to handle inside last year (he went to the line 166 times, the fourth-highest total in school history) and can score from the perimeter.

Weaknesses: The Bobcats didn't have a strong inside presence last year, but that should change with the addition of Shaun Stonerook at power forward. Stonerook led the Buckeyes in rebounding in his two seasons in Columbus. Ohio must improve its 3-point shooting (29.3 percent), which ranked last in the conference last season.

Outlook: The Bobcats stumbled badly last season, but they should bounce back quickly. Whitehead and Stonerook should provide a major lift.

Last league title: 1994. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1994.

Site: Athens, Ohio. **Home court:** The Convocation Center (13,000).

5. KENT

Coach: Gary Waters (22-35, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 13-17. MAC East: 9-9/T2nd.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Scott Effertz, G (6.0 ppg, 43.5 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 20.7 mpg; quit team); Tim Martin, F (transfer).

Starters returning (5): John Callaway, G, 6-2/Sr. (6.1 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 1.5 spg, 20.3 mpg); Kyren Massey, F/G, 6-6/Soph. (12.0 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 24.2 mpg); Ed Norvell, G, 6-2/Sr. (9.0 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 5.5 apg, 1.7 spg, 31.1 mpg); Mike Perry, C, 6-10/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 46.1 FG%, 23.2 mpg); John Whorton, F, 6-8/Jr. (11.4 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 56.3 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 27.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Jose Davis, G, 6-1/Jr. (6.9 ppg, 70.8 FT%, 20.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Andrew Mitchell, G, 6-0/Soph. (Prop 48); Eric Thomas, F, 6-5/Soph. (Prop 48).

Strengths: Ed Norvell is one of the best players in the league at his position; he needs 48 assists to break the Kent career record of 503. Kyren Massey was a MAC All-Freshman performer last season, showing signs of eventually becoming one of the top players in the conference. John Whorton is a horse.

Weaknesses: The Golden Flashes must shoot the ball better, especially at the line. Kent was one of five teams to shoot at least 623 free throws last year, but its atrocious 60.0 percent age was the worst in the MAC.

By DOUG ZALESKI
Muncie (Ind.) Star Press

PREDICTIONS

EAST DIVISION

1. Miami (Ohio)
2. Akron
3. Marshall
4. Ohio
5. Kent
6. Bowling Green
7. Buffalo

WEST DIVISION

1. Toledo
2. Ball State
3. N. Illinois
4. W. Michigan
5. C. Michigan
6. E. Michigan

ALL-MAC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/C	T.J. LUX, Northern Illinois	6-9/220	Sr.
F	KYREN MASSEY, Kent	6-6/185	Soph.
F	WALLY SZCZERBIAK, Miami (Ohio)	6-8/241	Sr.
G	DAMON FRIERSON, Miami (Ohio)	6-4/195	Sr.
G	LaDRELL WHITEHEAD, Ohio	5-9/180	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	SANJAY ADELL, Ohio	6-6/230	Jr.
C	KIRK COWAN, Bowling Green	6-7/190	Sr.
F	CARLTON KING, Marshall	6-5/190	Sr.
G	JIMMALL BALL, Akron	5-10/172	Jr.
G	JAMI BOSLEY, Akron	6-0/220	Jr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

WALLY SZCZERBIAK, F, Miami (Ohio)



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

LaDRELL WHITEHEAD, G, Ohio

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter: Wally Szczerbiak, Miami (Ohio).
- Best rebounder: T.J. Lux, Northern Illinois.
- Best playmaker: Ed Norvell, Kent.
- Best defender: Robert Kizer, Toledo.
- Best leaper: Derrick Wright, Marshall.
- Most versatile: Damon Frierson, Miami (Ohio).
- Most flamboyant: Derrick Wright, Marshall.
- Best NBA prospect: Wally Szczerbiak, Miami (Ohio).



Outlook: Kent has several good, young players, and the program appears to be on the rise. The Golden Flashes must learn to be more physical.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Kent, Ohio. **Home court:** Athletic and Convocation Center (6,327).

6. BOWLING GREEN

Coach: Dan Dakich (10-16, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 10-16. MAC East: 7-11/T4th.

Starters lost: None. **Others lost:** None.

Starters returning (5): Kirk Cowan, C, 6-7/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 50.2 FG%, 1.0 spg, 1.0 bpg, 33.0 mpg); Javier Crespo, F, 6-8/Sr. (17.4 ppg); Dave Esterkamp, F, 6-7/Jr. (12.7 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 71.1 FT%, 1.3 spg, 34.8 mpg); DeMar Moore, G, 5-11/Sr. (12.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 74.1 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 3.5 apg, 1.6 spg, 31.0 mpg); Tony Reid, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (16.7 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 83.5 FT%, 40.8 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 33.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Dubrey Black, G, 6-3/Soph. 5.2 ppg, 46.2 FG%, 15.5 mpg; Howard Chambers, G, 5-6/Sr.; Dave Furlin, G, 6-4/Jr.; Jay Keys, G, 6-2/Soph. (5.8 ppg, 78.0 FT%, 20.6 mpg); Anthony Stacey, F, 6-4/Jr. (RS/foot).

Top newcomers: Trent Jackson, G, 6-4/Soph. (transfer/Ohio State); Brent Klassen, C, 6-9/Jr.; Len Matela, C, 6-9/Fr.

Strengths: A return to health by Anthony Stacey is key. Bowling Green will be much deeper; the roster included nine players most of last season, and assistant Jamal Meeks often participated in practice so the Falcons could work with two units.

Weaknesses: The Falcons have to get bigger, and coach Dan Dakich made a move toward that by signing two 6-9 freshmen. Dakich wants his team to become better on defense. Bowling Green was the easiest team in the conference to shoot against last year, yielding a 47.9 percentage. **Outlook:** Everybody is back from last year's team, and Stacey's return will be a major plus. Still, the Falcons aren't as talented as most of the teams in their division. They'll have to battle hard to finish fourth.

Last league title: 1997 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1968. **Site:** Bowling Green, Ohio. **Home court:** Anderson Arena (5,000).

7. BUFFALO

Coach: Tim Cohane (73-66, 5 years; 217-211 overall, 16 years).

1997-98 record: 15-13. Mid-Continent: 9-7/5th.

Starters lost (4): Matt Clemens, G (9.8 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 80.8 FT%, 1.0 spg, 26.3 mpg); Mike Martinho, G (17.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 82.1 FT%, 38.7 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 33.1 mpg); Scott McMillin, F (8.9 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 80.4 FT%, 38.7 3-pt%, 25.9 mpg); Rasaan Young, F (19.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 51.8 FG%, 72.5 FT%, 1.4 spg, 30.2 mpg).

Others lost: Zaid Alkhas, C (10.5 mpg; transfer/Gannon); Tom Gustafsson, F (transfer).

Starters returning (1): Nikolai Alexeev, C, 6-11/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 80.5 FT%, 15.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Robert Harris, F, 6-4/Sr. (5.2 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 57.1 FG%, 19.2 mpg); Nate Johnson, F, 6-9/Sr. (RS/shoulder); Jon Kleidon, F, 6-6/Jr. (80.6 FT%, 9.6 mpg); Maliso Liborni, F, 6-8/Soph.; Ryan Peterson, G, 5-11/Soph. (5.8 ppg, 1.3 spg, 27.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Louis Campbell, G, 6-3/Fr. (RS); Will Campbell, F, 6-7/Fr. (RS); Koran Godwin, G, 6-4/Fr.; Bogdan Karebin, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: Ryan Peterson ranked first among all Division I freshmen last season at 5.8 apg. He will be counted on to provide some scoring this year, as well.

Weaknesses: A lack of experience isn't a concern, it's a downright liability. Two guards who will play a lot, Louis Campbell and Koran Godwin, are freshmen, and only two forwards have experience.

Outlook: This isn't the best season for Buffalo to enter the MAC. The Bulls return only one starter, and they will compete in a division where the first six teams range anywhere from very strong to pretty good.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Buffalo. **Home court:** Alumni Arena (8,500).

WEST DIVISION

1. TOLEDO

Coach: Stan Joplin (28-26, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 15-12. MAC West: 10-8/4th.

Starters lost (1): Casey Shaw, C (14.2 ppg, 10.0 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 30.3 mpg). **Others lost:** Joel Howard, F.

Starters returning (4): Clayton Burch, G, 6-0/Jr. (8.3 ppg, 78.8 FT%, 3.1 apg, 27.1 mpg); Brett Fedak, F, 6-7/Sr. (4.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 51.9 FG%, 74.5 FT%, 15.8 mpg); Robert Kizer, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (8.7 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 71.8 FT%, 2.1 spg, 31.3 mpg); Art Norman, G, 6-3/Sr. (10.6 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 76.1 FT%, 25.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Chad Kamstra, G, 6-1/Jr. (10.2 ppg, 85.7 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 25.3 mpg); Greg Stempin, F, 6-8/Soph. (9.2 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 39.7 3-pt%, 24.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Sammy Bacino, G, 6-2/Fr.; Robierre Cuillars, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (Prop 48); Justin Hall, G, 6-3/Fr.; Rickey Strong, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Albert Wilson, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: This team returns six of its top seven scorers. The backcourt trio of Clayton Burch, Chad Kamstra and

Norman could be good if all three show more consistency. **Weaknesses:** The key loss is Casey Shaw. The Rockets will have to make up for his absence with a committee in the post. Toledo was one of the worst ballhandling teams in the MAC. Justin Hall, who can play both guard spots, and Sammy Bacino will be asked to help in that area.

Outlook: The Rockets have tried to upgrade their athletic ability and become more up-tempo. This won't be a great team, but it is the best of a weak division lot.

Last league title: 1981 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1980. **Site:** Toledo, Ohio. **Home court:** Savage Hall (9,000).

2. BALL STATE

Coach: Ray McCallum (88-56, 5 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 21-8. MAC West: 14-4/T1st. Lost to Memphis in NIT first round.

Starters lost (2): Ryan Reed, C (6.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 54.0 FG%, 21.2 mpg); Bonzi Wells, F (22.8 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 49.0 FG%, 37.3 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 3.8 spg, 29.1 mpg).

Others lost: Doug Clark, F; Mitch Hankins, C (9.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 55.5 FG%, 73.6 FT%, 16.4 mpg); Lamont Roland, G (12.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 1.4 spg, 22.4 mpg; transfer/JC); Charles Smith, G (17.2 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Duane Clemens, G, 6-0/Jr. (10.6 ppg, 3.3 apg, 2.1 spg, 28.5 mpg); Mickey Hosier, G, 5-11/Jr. (74.2 FT%, 1.8 spg, 24.3 mpg); Wayne Johnson, F, 6-7/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 45.0 FG%, 71.4 FT%, 16.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Jerome Davis, F, 6-5/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 53.9 FG%, 17.7 mpg); Billy Lynch, G, 5-8/Soph.; Marcus Mason, F, 6-5/Sr. (15.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brian Burns, C, 6-9/Soph. (Prop 48); Floyd Campbell, F/G, 6-5/Fr.; Shane Franks, G, 5-11/Jr. (transfer/Mercer); Corey Harris, F/C, 6-8/Fr.; Patrick Jackson, G, 5-10/Fr.; Cedric Moodie, G, 6-2/Soph. (Prop 48); Josh Murray, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: The Cardinals should have an abundance of scorers on the perimeter. Two newcomers, Cedric Moodie and Floyd Campbell, will battle for time on the wing.

Weaknesses: The Cardinals' inside game hasn't been overpowering since Steve Payne left in 1995. This year's group of post prospects looks so nondescript that true freshman Corey Harris could emerge as the inside leader.

Outlook: The Cardinals must redefine roles for several players who in the past served mainly as caddies for Bonzi Wells. Ball State also will try to find a mix of chemistry, blending in five true freshmen.

Last league title: 1998 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1995. **Site:** Muncie, Ind. **Home court:** University Arena (11,500).

3. N. ILLINOIS

Coach: Brian Hammel (97-97, 7 years; 188-167 overall, 13 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 10-16. MAC West: 6-12/5th.

Starters lost (1): Donte Parker, G (9.7 ppg, 80.0 FT%, 43.1 3-pt%, 3.4 apg, 1.0 spg, 28.7 mpg).

Others lost: Tim Bryant, G (4.5 ppg, 11.9 mpg; transfer); Tori Hughes, F/G (10.5 mpg; knee injury).

Starters returning (4): Burton Anderson, F, 6-4/Sr. (9.2 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 22.6 mpg); Steve Determan, F/C, 6-9/Soph. (6.2 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 23.5 mpg); Rey Jones, G/F, 6-0/Jr. (4.6 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 19.2 mpg); T.J. Lux, C/F, 6-9/Sr. (18.6 ppg, 11.1 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 73.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 1.4 bpg, 34.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Mike Brown, G, 6-0/Soph. (5.9 ppg, 87.2 FT%, 22.3 mpg); Phiney Dukes, G, 6-0/Sr. (18.6 mpg); Charlie Ries, F, 6-6/Soph.; Benjamin Ross, F/G, 6-4/Sr.; Andre Williams, G, 6-2/Sr. (6.2 ppg, 16.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Ephraim Eaddy, G, 5-10/Jr. (JC); Matt Nelson, C/F, 6-9/Fr.; Leon Rodgers, F, 6-7/Fr.; Garrett Thomas, G, 6-1/Fr.

Strengths: T.J. Lux earned first-team all-conference honors by leading the league in rebounding and ranking seventh in scoring. Burton Anderson made nice improvement late last year.

Weaknesses: The Huskies need more consistent play in the backcourt. Rey Jones and Mike Brown will have to pick up the pace offensively to take some of the pressure off Lux.

Outlook: Depth was a problem, but a strong freshman class might offer early contributions. Playing freshmen isn't conducive to moving up in the standings, but with a player of Lux's stature on the floor, they don't have to be great right away.

Last league title: 1991 (Mid-Con). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996. **Site:** DeKalb, Ill. **Home court:** Evans Field House (6,044).

4. W. MICHIGAN

Coach: Bob Donewald (130-122, 9 years; 338-247 overall, 20 years; 3-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 21-8. MAC West: 14-4/T1st. Lost to Stanford in NCAA Midwest second round.

Starters lost (4): Rashod Johnson, G (19.1 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 77.0 3-pt, 2.0 spg, 28.7 mpg); Jason Kimbrough, G (9.7 ppg, 46.7 FG%, 82.6 FT%, 43.5 3-pt%, 5.7 apg, 1.8 spg, 32.6 mpg); Aaron Toothman, F (4.1 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 29.7 mpg); Sadi Washington, F/G (21.6 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 81.0 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 1.9 spg, 35.4 mpg).

Others lost: Josh Jansen, G (quit team).

Starters returning (1): Shaun Jackson, C/F, 6-7/Sr. (9.6 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 54.8 FG%, 15.5 spg, 29.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Ryan Black, F, 6-5/Sr.; Isaac Bullock, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (7.1 ppg, 50.7 FG%, 80.0 FT%, 46.2 3-pt%, 16.1

mpg); Tony Collins, G/F, 6-3/Soph.; Kylo Jones, G, 6-0/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 42.0 3-pt%, 11.8 mpg); Brad Van Timmeren, C/F, 6-7/Sr. (3.2 rpg, 47.9 FG%, 12.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Tony Barksdale, G, 6-2/Jr.; Rod Brown, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Kenny Chaffin, G/F, 6-6/Fr.; Thomas Haskell, C, 6-10/Fr.; Emil Mulic, C/F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Tim O'Neill, G, 5-9/Fr.; Jesse Slaughter, F, 6-8/Fr.; Thadus Williams, G/F, 6-4/G/F, Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Shaun Jackson made a nice transition from junior college last season, finishing seventh in the MAC in rebounding. Tony Barksdale is expected to fill some of the void in perimeter shooting.

Weaknesses: Western might have to hold an open audition for guards after losing Sadi Washington, Rashod Johnson and Jason Kimbrough. Kylo Jones has the inside track at off-guard, and several newcomers will contend for time.

Outlook: The Broncos must find scorers and leaders. They also must mold the new faces into a unit that can play well defensively because they likely won't be able to survive shootouts.

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Kalamazoo, Mich. **Home court:** University Arena (5,800).

5. C. MICHIGAN

Coach: Jay Smith (5-21, 1 year; 28-27 overall, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 5-21. MAC West: 3-15/6th.

Starters lost (2): Aaron Brown, F (11.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 73.8 FT%, 39.5 3-pt%, 23.0 mpg); Jerry Glover, F (11.8 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 37.9 3-pt%, 29.8 mpg).

Others lost: Ed Carter, G (6.0 ppg, 37.0 3-pt%, 15.2 mpg; transfer); Curtis Gilleyleen, C (13.2 mpg; left team); Lee Hampton, F (7.3 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 46.2 FG%, 16.0 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Jon Borovich, G, 6-1/Soph. (6.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 3.0 apg, 1.0 spg, 25.3 mpg); Tim Kisner, G, 6-2/Soph. (12.1 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 73.3 FT%, 38.8 3-pt%, 3.1 apg, 1.3 spg, 30.9 mpg); Dan Schell, F/C, 6-5/Jr. (10.5 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 45.4 FG%, 70.3 FT%, 2.1 bpg, 29.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Ted Baggett, G, 5-8/Jr.; Luke Johnson, G, 6-2/Soph. (13.9 mpg); Brent Larson, G, 5-8/Soph. (36.4 3-pt%, 12.0 mpg); Todd Simmons, F, 6-4/Jr.

Top newcomers: Derrick Bird, G/F, 6-4/Fr.; Robert Brown, G/F, 6-4/Fr.; Rudy Gaytan, C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Jamar Hill, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Mike Manciel, F, 6-5/Fr.; Joe Shepherd, G, 6-2/Fr.; David Webber, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Jason Webber, F, 6-6/Jr.

(transfer/Michigan State); Omar Zeigler, F, 6-6/Fr. (RS). **Strengths:** Central Michigan was short and scrappy last year, which is another way of saying it didn't have a lot of talent. The Chippewas have made a significant upgrade in their athletic ability and quickness.

Weaknesses: A lack of experience is a problem. The Chippewas have no seniors, and 14 players are freshmen and sophomores. Size in the post is a concern: CMU has one scholarship player bigger than 6-6.

Outlook: The Chippewas have undergone a significant makeover, starting the season with 19 players. Twelve of the players are new to the program.

Last league title: 1987. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1987.

Site: Mt. Pleasant, Mich. **Home court:** Rose Arena (5,200).

6. E. MICHIGAN

Coach: Milton Barnes (42-20, 2 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-10. MAC West: 13-5/3rd. Lost to Michigan State in NCAA East first round.

Starters lost (5): Earl Boykins, G (25.7 ppg, 47.2 FG%, 81.6 FT%, 40.7 3-pt%, 5.5 apg, 1.9 spg, 36.9 mpg); Derrick Dial, G (20.9 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 44.8 FG%, 78.5 FT%, 39.9 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 35.5 mpg); Nkechi Ezugwu, F/G (7.7 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 52.6 FG%, 32.7 mpg); James Head, G/F (10.8 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 1.8 spg, 31.6 mpg); Jon Zajac, F (6.6 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 26.2 mpg).

Others lost: Sharif Fordham, G (transfer).

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: DeWayne Geeter-Burns, F/C, 6-8/Jr.; Charlie Eibeler, G, 6-5/Jr. (RS); Avin Howard, G, 6-1/Soph. (17.0 mpg); Jermaine Sheffield, G/F, 6-6/Jr.; Corey Tarrant, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (10.8 mpg); Ajani Williams, C, 6-10/Sr. (50.0 FG%, 9.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Craig Erquhart, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Larry Fisher, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); DeSean Hadley, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Solomon McGee, F, 6-7/Jr. (transfer/Coastal Carolina); Tyson Radney, F, 6-7/Soph. (Prop 48); Ken Richardson, F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48); K.C. Tanner, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Calvin Warner, F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: Avin Howard figured he'd spend last year as the backup point guard to Earl Boykins. When the Eagles switched to a three-guard lineup midway through the year, Howard earned 12 starts. He's the top returning player on this year's team and the starter at Boykins' lead-guard spot.

Weaknesses: Where to begin? The Eagles suffered heavy personnel losses. The five departed players took 91 percent of the scoring and 84 percent of the rebounding with them.

Outlook: The Eagles welcome four JC transfers. A true freshman, two Prop 48s, a transfer and five holdovers will be added to the mix. The final result could be interesting.

Last league title: 1996.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Ypsilanti, Mich. **Home court:** Convocation Center (8,824).

1. GONZAGA

Coach: Dan Monson (24-10, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 24-10. West Coast: 10-4/1st. Lost to Hawaii in NIT second round.

Starters lost (1): Bakari Hendrix, C (19.9 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 73.3 FT%, 30.6 mpg).

Others lost: Carl Crider, G; Doug Griffin, F (4.1 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 58.9 FG%, 14.2 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Axel Dench, C, 6-11/Jr. (5.3 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 49.3 FG%, 36.7 3-pt%, 18.6 mpg); Richie Frahm, G, 6-5/Jr. (12.1 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 45.2 FG%, 82.9 FT%, 44.5 3-pt%, 27.2 mpg); Mike Leasure, F, 6-7/Sr. (5.0 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 71.8 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 20.5 mpg); Matt Santangelo, G, 6-1/Jr. (16.2 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 76.9 FT%, 43.3 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 33.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Casey Calvary, F, 6-8/Soph. (51.0 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 13.5 mpg); Jeremy Eaton, C, 6-9/Sr. (RS/development); Ryan Floyd, G, 6-1/Jr.; Quentin Hall, G, 5-8/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 45.0 FG%, 40.5 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 24.0 mpg); Mike Nilson, G, 6-5/Jr. (52.2 FG%, 9.9 mpg); Mark Spink, F, 6-8/Soph.

Top newcomers: Eric Chilton, C, 7-1/Fr.; Zach Gourde, F, 6-8/Fr.; Damany Hendrix, F, 6-5/Fr.

Strengths: Point guard Matt Santangelo is the WCC's best player under 7-0 and provides everything you need from a team leader. He and shooting ace Richie Frahm give the Bulldogs the WCC's best backcourt. Casey Calvary has the look of a potential star and symbolizes the Bulldogs' improved athleticism and depth. Nearly everyone shoots 3-pointers and free throws well, and the Zags led the WCC in field-goal percentage defense (41.9 percent) last season and should again.

Weaknesses: Bakari Hendrix, last year's WCC Player of the Year and the conference's top scorer, is gone, leaving a huge frontcourt scoring void. Axel Dench didn't produce as expected last season, and a difficult non-conference schedule could hurt confidence.

Outlook: With five of the top six scorers back from last year's regular-season champions, the Bulldogs have what it takes to win it all. This team is mature enough to handle big-name opposition and benefit from it, even if it results in a few early losses.

Last league title: 1998.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Spokane, Wash. **Home court:** Martin Centre (4,000).

2. SAINT MARY'S

Coach: Dave Bollwinkel (12-15, 1 year; 70-98 overall, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 12-15. West Coast: 7-7/T4th.

Starters lost (1): David Sivulich, G (19.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 81.7 FT%, 37.6 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 35.8 mpg).

Others lost: Scott Matek, G.

Starters returning (4): Frank Allocco, G, 5-10/Jr. (9.6 ppg, 82.8 FT%, 43.4 3-pt%, 4.0 apg, 31.0 mpg); Josh Greer, F, 6-7/Jr. (8.4 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 23.2 mpg); Eric Knapp, G, 6-5/Sr. (3.0 rpg, 20.5 mpg); Eric Schraeder, F, 6-9/Sr. (15.7 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 49.3 FG%, 86.8 FT%, 39.4 3-pt%, 30.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Jesse Bond, C, 6-9/Jr. (14.4 mpg); O'Neil Kamaka, F, 6-5/Sr. (4.9 ppg, 14.9 mpg); Frankie King, G, 6-1/Soph.; Frank Knight, G, 6-2/Sr. (9.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 40.6 3-pt%, 19.0 mpg); Brad Millard, C, 7-3/Jr. (RS/broken foot); Brett Varga, F/C, 6-8/Sr. (14.4 mpg); Dorian Williams, G, 6-4/Soph.

Top newcomers: Seth Dahle, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Blake Jensen, C, 6-11/Fr.; Dan Pangrazio, G, 6-3/Fr.

Strengths: If he's recovered from the broken foot that sidelined him for all but two games last season, Brad Millard should be the most dominant force in the WCC, especially defensively (92 blocks in 1996-97). He and versatile Eric Schraeder, who probably

will be moved from the blocks to small forward, may be the WCC's best frontcourt players.

Weaknesses: The departure of All-WCC guard David Sivulich means the loss of scoring, outside shooting and emotional leadership, things Saint Mary's now lacks. The Gaels have no proven power forward to relieve Millard of inside drudgery.

Outlook: Eleven of the Gaels' top 12 scorers return, not including Millard, who, if he continues to progress, can carry the team. If Eric Knapp or Frank Knight are the shooting threat Saint Mary's needs, if JC transfer Seth Dahle or Josh Greer are inside forces and if point guard Frank Allocco can be a little more than just reliable, Saint Mary's can reach the NCAA Tournament for the second time in three years.

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Moraga, Calif. **Home court:** McKeon Pavilion (5,000).

3. PEPPERDINE

Coach: Lorenzo Romar (23-31, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 17-10. West Coast: 9-5/2nd.

Starters lost (2): Gerald Brown, G (16.9 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 81.6 FT%, 38.2 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 35.2 mpg); Bryan Hill, F (12.2 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 62.8 FG%, 1.1 spg, 31.2 mpg).

Others lost: Aaron Butler, G (quit team); omm'A Givens, C (8.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 50.4 FG%, 20.4 mpg; quit team).

Starters returning (3): Jelani Gardner, G, 6-6/Sr. (14.1 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 77.6 FT%, 36.4 3-pt%, 5.4 apg, 1.9 spg, 32.7 mpg); Kelvin Gibbs, F, 6-6/Soph. (4.7 ppg, 1.1 spg, 21.3 mpg); Tommie Prince, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (7.8 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 1.0 spg, 30.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Tezale Archie, G, 6-1/Jr. (RS/back, groin); Robert Fomby, G, 6-1/Jr. (12.0 mpg); Marc McDowell, F, 6-7/Sr. (4.4 ppg, 71.4 FT%, 37.8 3-pt%, 17.2 mpg); Al Minahan, G, 6-3/Soph.

Top newcomers: Craig Lewis, G, 6-3/Fr.; David Lalazarian, F, 6-7/Soph. (transfer/Notre Dame); Nick Sheppard, C, 6-11/Jr. (transfer/LSU); Cedric Suitt, C, 6-11/Fr. (RS/knee); Jeremy Vague, C, 6-10/Fr. (RS); Ross Varner, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: There is plenty of talent, including all-conference point guard Jelani Gardner, who came on at the end of last season and ranks behind only Gonzaga's Matt Santangelo among WCC guards. Tommie Prince may assert himself offensively from a guard spot instead of small forward. Transfers David Lalazarian, a shooter who got playing time as a Notre Dame freshman, and Nick Sheppard, a former starter at LSU, certainly can play at this level.

Weaknesses: Ballhandling is a question. Gerald Brown, the team's leading scorer last year and a reliable ballhandler, is gone, and some say Gardner really is an off-guard playing the point. Up front, Bryan Hill and omm'A Givens are gone, and the transfers may take time to gel with teammates.

Outlook: Like last season, the Waves should come on toward the end of the season. In fact, they are one of three teams that could win it all. It'll take considerable organizing skills from coach Lorenzo Romar, because four probable starters—Gardner, Prince, Sheppard and Lalazarian—are transfers. It could have been five if Givens still were around.

Last league title: 1993.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Malibu, Calif. **Home court:** Firestone Fieldhouse (3,104).

4. SANTA CLARA

Coach: Dick Davey (107-63, 6 years; 2-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 18-10. West Coast: 8-6/3rd.

BY JAKE CURTIS
San Francisco Chronicle

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Gonzaga | 5. San Francisco |
| 2. Saint Mary's | 6. Portland |
| 3. Pepperdine | 7. San Diego |
| 4. Santa Clara | 8. Loyola Marymount |

ALL-WEST COAST

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
C	BRAD MILLARD, Saint Mary's	7-3/345	Jr.
F	ERIC SCHRAEDER, Saint Mary's	6-9/220	Sr.
F	RYAN WILLIAMS, San Diego	6-6/225	Sr.
G	JELANI GARDNER, Pepperdine	6-6/205	Sr.
G	MATT SANTANGELO, Gonzaga	6-1	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	DAVID LALAZARIAN, Pepperdine	6-7/205	Soph.
F	TODD WUSCHNIG, Santa Clara	6-6/210	Jr.
F	GERALD ZIMMERMAN, San Francisco	6-6/215	Sr.
G	HAYWOOD EADDY, Loyola Marymount	5-4/140	Sr.
G	RICHIE FRAHM, Gonzaga	6-5	Jr.

(Gonzaga does not provide weights of its players)

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BRAD MILLARD, C, Saint Mary's



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

DAVID LALAZARIAN, F, Pepperdine

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Richie Frahm, Gonzaga.

Best rebounder: Brad Millard, Saint Mary's.

Best playmaker: Matt Santangelo, Gonzaga.

Best defender: Brad Millard, Saint Mary's.

Best leaper: Casey Calvary, Gonzaga.

Most versatile: Eric Schraeder, Saint Mary's.

Most flamboyant: Haywood Eaddy, Loyola Marymount.

Best NBA prospect: Brad Millard, Saint Mary's.



Starters lost (2): Craig Johnson, G (12.6 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 78.1 FT%, 1.9 spg, 30.3 mpg); Lloyd Pierce, F (11.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 1.2 spg, 30.0 mpg).

Others lost: Paul Sweeney, G (quit team).

Starters returning (3): Brian Jones, G, 6-3/Jr. (15.6 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 4.1 apg, 1.8 spg, 28.5 mpg); may miss season with knee injury); Alex Lopez, C, 6-10/Sr. (5.2 ppg, 19.1 mpg); Todd Wuschniig, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.4 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 1.0 spg, 30.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Stephen Dely, C, 6-10/Soph.; Delano D'Oyen, G, 6-0/Soph. (9.8 mpg); Nathan Fast, G, 6-4/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 40.6 3-pt%, 24.2 mpg); Chris Gomes, F, 6-8/Jr. (3.7 rpg, 13.5 mpg); Jamie Holmes, F, 6-8/Jr. (6.5 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 18.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Andre Bobbitt, F, 6-7/Fr.; David Emslie, F/C, 6-11/Fr. (RS/hip); Justin Holbrook, F, 6-7/Fr. (RS/foot); Darrell Teat, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Brian Vaka, G, 6-2/Fr.

Strengths: Todd Wuschniig is the epitome of Santa Clara basketball—not pretty, but tough and strong with the ability to collect points and rebounds. The Broncos are bigger and stronger than last year, a throwback to past Broncos teams, and the Dick Davey system makes opponents play poorly, always putting Santa Clara among the leaders in field-goal percentage defense.

Weaknesses: The loss of All-WCC point guard Brian Jones, who dislocated his knee in the summer, is devastating. He won't play at least until December and probably not at all this season. The already-thin backcourt is now hurting. The Broncos lost the one player who can create offense, and they are without a proven point guard. Nathan Fast probably will try to run the point.

Outlook: A title contender before Jones' injury, Santa Clara now is a notch behind the top three and has been forced to change to a more structured, patient attack. But the Broncos have finished first three of the past four years, despite never being the favorite, so they cannot be discounted.

Last league title: 1997. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.

Site: Santa Clara, Calif. **Home court:** Toso Pavilion (5,000).

5. SAN FRANCISCO

Coach: Philip Mathews (51-35, 3 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 19-11. West Coast: 7-7/T4th. Lost to Utah in NCAA West first round.

Starters lost (3): Zerrick Campbell, F (9.2 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 1.1 spg, 26.9 mpg); Damian Cantrell, F (10.9 ppg, 9.7 rpg, 51.9 FG%, 1.4 spg, 29.4 mpg); Hakeem Ward, F (17.0 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 55.9 FG%, 1.1 spg, 31.1 mpg).

Others lost: Jamal Cobbs, G (6.6 ppg, 45.3 FG%, 37.5 3-pt%, 4.0 apg, 1.2 spg, 23.0 mpg); M.J. Nodilo, G (10.1 ppg, 91.4 FT%, 36.3 3-pt%, 24.8 mpg); Ra'oof Sadat, F (4.6 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 15.9 mpg; transfer/UNLV).

Starters returning (2): Ali Thomas, G, 6-2/Soph. (11.1 ppg, 80.4 FT%, 40.5 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 25.4 mpg); Dony Wilcher, G, 5-10/Soph. (4.4 ppg, 76.6 FT%, 12.4 mpg).

Other returnees: LyRyan Russell, G, 6-0/Soph. (73.0 FT%, 1.0 spg, 14.3 mpg); Gerald Zimmerman, F/G, 6-6/Sr. (RS/knee).

Top newcomers: Hondre Brewer, C, 6-11/Fr.; Eugene Brown, F, 6-9/Fr.; Derek Christensen, F, 6-5/Fr. (RS); James Lee, F, 6-6/Soph. (JC); Terrence Moore, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Glen Summerall, G, 6-4/Fr.

Strengths: Versatile swingman Gerald Zimmerman is back after missing last season with a knee injury. He will aid the Dons' pressing, up-tempo scheme. That style started clicking last season when WCC Freshman of the Year Ali Thomas and Dony Wilcher were installed as the starting backcourt in the final month. That sparked the Dons' roll to their first NCAA Tournament berth since 1982. These three lead a backcourt that can create problems offensively and defensively.

Weaknesses: The frontcourt was wiped out, leaving the Dons short and inexperienced. Gone are Hakeem Ward, their top scorer and lone inside presence, and Ra'oof

Sadat, the star of the Dons' WCC tourney title game win, who transferred to UNLV.

Outlook: Philip Mathews regularly will switch lineups in search of a successful combination. But for the Dons to have a winning conference record, two JC transfers, James Lee and Terrence Moore, must make sizable contributions inside. With only four players back from its NCAA team, USF is probably a year from contending.

Last league title: 1981 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: San Francisco. **Home court:** War Memorial Gym (5,300).

6. PORTLAND

Coach: Rob Chavez (63-50, 4 years; 91-77 overall, 6 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 14-13. West Coast: 7-7/T4th.

Starters lost (2): Chivo Anderson, G (13.3 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 41.0 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 30.1 mpg); Dionn Holton, G (8.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 5.6 apg, 1.4 spg, 32.9 mpg).

Others lost: Jihan Bowes-Little, G (transferred); Luke Palumbis, C (9.3 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Troy Collins, F, 6-6/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 49.6 FG%, 23.3 mpg); Phillip Dejworek, C, 6-9/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 49.6 FG%, 21.8 mpg); Jason Franklin, G, 6-4/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 75.6 FT%, 1.6 spg, 24.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Travis Andrews, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.8 ppg, 12.7 mpg); Brian Jackson, F, 6-5/Jr. (5.0 ppg, 54.2 FG%, 14.3 mpg); Jimmie Rainwater, F, 6-6/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 1.2 spg, 22.9 mpg); Eric Sandrin, F, 6-9/Soph. (48.8 FG%, 14.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Davon Johnson, G, 6-1/Fr.; Ryan Jones, G, 6-3/Fr.; Ross Jorgensen, G, 6-1/Fr. (RS); Bryan Mills, F, 6-7/Fr.; Chukwuma Neboh, F, 6-11/Jr. (JC); Jason Robbins, F, 6-6/Fr. (RS); Daniel Sandrin, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: The Pilots return six players who started at least one game, yet have just one senior on the roster. Jason Franklin and Troy Collins could be among the WCC's elite by season's end, and Collins and Phillip Dejworek head a fairly deep frontcourt. An easy non-conference schedule should get the Pilots rolling.

Weaknesses: The Pilots have no big scoring threat and lack 3-point shooting, but worse, they have no point guard with the graduation of Dionn Holton, the WCC's assist leader last season. A poor rebounding team last year, Portland remains a team without much frontcourt bulk. Losing six of their last seven games last season will not enhance the Pilots' confidence early.

Outlook: If Franklin or redshirt freshman Ross Jorgensen can adequately fill the point guard spot, the Pilots' defense could carry them to a winning record, thanks, in part, to the cupcake schedule. For Portland to finish in the WCC's first division, Franklin and/or Collins would have to develop into a star, which is not out of the question. Look out for Portland next year.

Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.

Site: Portland. **Home court:** Chiles Center (5,000).

7. SAN DIEGO

Coach: Brad Holland (56-55, 4 years; 79-86 overall, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 14-14. West Coast: 5-9/7th.

Starters lost (3): Brian Miles, F/C (16.8 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 58.2 FG%, 81.1 FT%, 51.7 3-pt%, 28.9 mpg); Nosa Obasohan, F (9.1 ppg, 43.9 3-pt%, 25.1 mpg); Alex Parker, G (10.1 ppg, 45.2 FG%, 40.3 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 26.1 mpg).

Others lost: Mike Courtney, F; Sam Luke, F.

Starters returning (2): Brock Jacobsen, G, 6-5/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 79.4 FT%, 39.7 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 28.4 mpg); Ryan Williams, F, 6-6/Sr. (15.1 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 77.9 FT%, 30.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Michael Blackmon, F, 6-6/Soph.; Jim Brewer, G, 6-3/Soph.; Jeff Knoll, C, 7-0/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 57.5 FG%, 13.4 mpg); Lamont Smith, G, 6-2/Sr. (19.1 mpg); Dana White, G, 6-0/Soph. (4.6 ppg, 1.3 spg, 23.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Scott Boardman, G, 6-4/Fr.; Kevin

Hanson, C, 6-10/Fr.; Andre Laws, G, 6-1/Fr.; Tom Lippold, F/G, 6-6/Fr. (RS); Jason Powell, F, 6-9/Fr. (RS); Cameron Rigby, F, 6-7/Soph. (transfer/Bradley); Steve Ross, G/F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: Ryan Williams is limited, but he put up nice numbers last year and his scoring should increase this season. Brock Jacobsen had a bit of a drop-off after being WCC freshman of the year in 1997, but he hit 50 percent of his 3-point shots in conference play and he can score. The Toreros seldom beat themselves.

Weaknesses: Much of the Toreros' offense is gone, particularly their 3-point shooting, and graduated Brian Miles cannot be replaced. San Diego's top three returning guards—Jacobsen, Dana White and Lamont Smith—shot under 40 percent last season, and Williams is the only proven rebounder on a team that didn't rebound well. Last season, 5-11 Alex Parker led the team in blocks, with 11.

Outlook: The keys may be center Jeff Knoll and transfer Cameron Rigby, one of whom must become a presence inside for the Toreros to have a winning conference record. San Diego finished well last season, which will help, but it just does not have the personnel to challenge this time around.

Last league title: 1987. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1987.

Site: San Diego. **Home court:** USD Sports Center (2,500).

8. LOYOLA MARYMOUNT

Coach: Charles Bradley (7-20, 1 year; 44-63 overall, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 7-20. West Coast: 3-11/8th.

Starters lost (3): Ben Ammerman, F (10.9 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 80.6 FT%, 37.1 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 28.7 mpg); Peter Cornell, C (8.0 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 58.0 FG%, 1.2 bpg, 18.6 mpg; graduated early); Kenny Hotopp, F (8.0 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 23.0 mpg).

Others lost: Jason Perry, F (quit team).

Starters returning (2): Haywood Eaddy, G, 5-4/Sr. (15.2 ppg, 83.5 FT%, 38.5 3-pt%, 4.9 apg, 2.1 spg, 33.4 mpg); Willie Allen, G, 6-5/Sr. (9.2 ppg, 23.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Silvester Kainga, C, 6-11/Sr. (10.6 mpg); Tim Kennedy, G, 6-5/Sr. (7.7 ppg, 42.3 3-pt%, 19.4 mpg); Elton Mashack, F, 6-5/Soph. (6.5 ppg, 19.0 mpg); Mihail Papadopoulos, G, 5-10/Sr.; Leo Saucedo, G, 6-4/Sr. (6.6 ppg, 21.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Robert Davis, G, 6-3/Fr.; Rupert McClendon, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Matt Moore, F, 6-7/Sr.; Curtis Slaughter, G, 6-6/Fr.; Michael Stewart, F, 6-7/Fr.; Ed Wolfe, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Tiny guard Haywood Eaddy (5-4, 140) was among the WCC leaders in scoring, assists and steals, and he will control almost everything for the Lions. Tim Kennedy and Willie Allen also return to give the Lions a decent backcourt. Loyola led the WCC in blocks last season, and Silvester Kainga was fourth individually.

Weaknesses: Four of the top five scorers are gone; so are the top three rebounders. Loyola has practically nothing inside, and newcomers from junior college will have to play prominent roles up front. The Lions were poor defensively last season and don't figure to get any better, and rebounding will be a significant problem.

Outlook: This is a major challenge for coach Charles Bradley, who is gradually changing the Lions into an up-tempo team. They will be hard-pressed to match last season's record, and, unlike last year, they will have trouble keeping games close. Consecutive road games in December against Utah, Xavier and UCLA could crush the team's confidence. The positive? Because of his size and his numbers, Eaddy may get some national exposure.

Last league title: 1990. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1990. **Site:** Los Angeles. **Home court:** Gersten Pavilion (4,156).

TSN

MIDWESTERN COLLEGIATE

RANK 13

BY TOM MARKOWSKI
Detroit News

1. DETROIT

Coach: Perry Watson (88-58, 5 years; 1-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 25-6, MCC: 12-2/T1st. Lost to Purdue in NCAA Midwest second round.

Starters lost (3): Brian Alexander, C (10.1 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 58.4 FG%, 1.8 bpg, 28.6 mpg); E.J. Haralson, G (6.5 ppg, 87.0 FT%, 20.5 mpg); Derrick Hayes, G (13.7 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 71.9 FT%, 1.1 spg, 29.7 mpg).

Others lost: Matt Bauman, F (left school); Perry Robinson, F (7.3 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 52.1 FG%, 80.4 FT%, 45.5 3-pt%, 20.6 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Bacari Alexander, F, 6-5/Sr. (4.2 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 21.4 mpg); Jermaine Jackson, G, 6-4/Sr. (12.1 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 45.1 FG%, 70.1 FT%, 4.7 apg, 1.5 spg, 32.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Walter Craft, C, 6-10/Soph.; Desmond Ferguson, F/G, 6-6/Jr. (8.9 ppg, 88.2 FT%, 40.2 3-pt%, 20.3 mpg); Michael Jordan, F, 6-6/Soph.; Rashad Phillips, G, 5-9/Jr. (10.0 ppg, 84.2 FT%, 3.3 apg, 1.7 spg, 21.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Darius Belin, G, 6-3/Fr.; Brandon Gray, G, 6-3/Soph. (Prop 48); Terrell Riggs, F, 6-7/Fr.; Julian Van Dyke, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Daniel Whye, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Jermaine Jackson was the leader of the team the last half of the 1997-98 season and should assume an even greater role. Desmond Ferguson and Rashad Phillips were part of Perry Watson's eight-player rotation last year, so there is experience. Phillips probably is the quickest guard in the MCC. Daniel Whye and Julian Van Dyke arrive with high praise from Watson and should help immediately where the Titans need it most—the frontcourt. If Walter Craft continues to improve, he will give the Titans a true center, a rare commodity in the MCC.

Weaknesses: Other than Jackson, the Titans don't have a go-to player. Watson needs to find someone else to help Jackson carry the scoring load. The frontcourt is a question. If Whye and Van Dyke can combine to play 20-25 minutes and contribute 13-15 rebounds, some of those questions will be answered.

Outlook: The experience of playing, and winning, in the NCAA Tournament will prove invaluable. Look for the Titans to contend for the MCC crown and another Big Dance bid.

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Detroit. **Home court:** Calihan Hall (8,837).

2. ILLINOIS-CHICAGO

Coach: Jimmy Collins (37-20, 2 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 22-6, MCC: 12-2/T1st. Lost to UNC-Charlotte in NCAA East first round.

Starters lost (3): Anthony Coomes, G (13.5 ppg, 86.0 FT%, 43.3 3-pt%, 5.5 apg, 1.2 spg, 35.9 mpg); Bryant Lowe, F (15.1 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 47.5 FG%, 51.2 3-pt%, 33.3 mpg); Mark Miller, G (19.7 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 70.5 FT%, 40.7 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 36.1 mpg).

Others lost: Clifton Flagg, F (3.3 rpg, 79.5 FT%, 16.1 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Anton Collins, F, 6-8/Sr. (3.1 rpg, 48.6 FG%, 15.2 mpg); Konstantine Stavropoulos, F, 6-6/Sr. (9.2 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 77.3 FT%, 49.2 3-pt%, 21.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Jason Ayers, G, 6-1/Soph.; Theandre Kimbrough, G, 6-2/Sr. (6.5 ppg, 1.0 spg, 18.0 mpg); Thor Solverson, C, 6-11/Soph.; Leonard

Walker, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (76.3 FT%, 54.3 FG%, 11.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Joel Bullock, G, 6-2/Soph. (JC); Ian Hanavan, F, 6-6/Fr.; Jordan Kardos, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Cory Little, F/G, 6-5/Soph. (Prop 48); Jon Pierre Mitchom, G, 6-2/Fr.; T.J. Mixson, G, 6-0/Fr. (RS); Tarrie Monroe, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Bryant Notree, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (transfer/Illinois).

Strengths: There are a number of talented athletes, led by Bryant Notree, who range in size from 6-2 to 6-8. There also is a 6-11 center. Though few have experience as Flames, a number gained experience elsewhere, as Notree is a transfer from Illinois. Joel Bullock and Tarrie Monroe are touted JC transfers. Anton Collins is a returning starter, but he may lose his spot; the new players are that good.

Weaknesses: Replacing MCC Player of the Year Mark Miller and Bryant Lowe will be difficult. Finding a point guard will be coach Jimmy Collins' first challenge. There's talent, but can it play as a team?

Outlook: There's no reason to think the Flames again won't contend for the title. Notree will be asked to fill the leadership void created by Miller's departure. Notree's experience and success at the Big Ten level should help him make a smooth transition. This year's squad should have better balance than last year's unit.

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Chicago. **Home court:** UIC Pavilion (8,000).

3. WISCONSIN-GREEN BAY

Coach: Mike Heideman (56-30, 3 years; 122-55 overall, 7 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-12, MCC: 7-7/4th.

Starters lost (2): Kevin Olm, G (7.3 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 73.2 FT%, 4.4 apg, 1.4 spg, 31.4 mpg); Wayne Walker, F (13.0 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 60.1 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 50.0 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 29.9 mpg).

Others lost: James Daggis, F; Todd Hassenfeldt, F. **Starters returning (3):** Jerry Carstensen, F, 6-7/Jr. (9.5 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 45.1 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 26.1 mpg); Matt Hill, F/C, 6-10/Sr. (9.9 ppg, 52.3 FG%, 75.9 FT%, 1.4 bpg, 26.1 mpg); B.J. LaRue, G, 6-4/Jr. (10.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 84.3 FT%, 44.1 3-pt%, 28.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Ryan Borowicz, G, 6-1/Sr. (6.1 ppg, 100.0 FT%, 16.6 mpg); Luke Kiss, G, 6-1/Sr. (17.5 mpg); Paul Kraft, G, 6-3/Soph. (80.0 FT%, 38.2 3-pt%, 11.4 mpg); Mike Nabena, F, 6-8/Sr.

Top newcomers: Greg Babcock, F, 6-9/Fr.; Devante Blanks, G, 5-10/Fr.; Chancellor Collins, G, 6-4/Fr.; Ryan Mueller, F, 6-6/Fr. (transfer/NE Illinois).

Strengths: Defense and 3-point shooting. Coach Mike Heideman does a great job selling his players on his system. The Phoenix play a style that often is agonizing to watch—and frustrating to play against. Add to this players like B.J. LaRue and Ryan Borowicz, who combined to make 89 3-pointers last year, and inside players Jerry Carstensen, Matt Hill and Mike Nabena—who rebound well, set picks and can hit mid-range jumpers—and UWGB looks solid.

Weaknesses: The loss of Kevin Olm can't be overstated. He led the team in assists, but most of his positives didn't show up in the box score. UWGB plays best when it dictates tempo, and Heideman must find that player. The Phoenix are tall but lack muscle.

Outlook: This is the team no MCC foe enjoys playing, especially on the road. Look for LaRue to assume a scoring role, and if Heideman can find a replacement for Olm, the Phoenix can win it all.

Last league title: 1996.

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Green Bay, Wisc. **Home court:** Brown County Arena (5,600).

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Detroit | 5. Loyola (Ill.) |
| 2. Ill.-Chicago | 6. Cleveland St. |
| 3. UW-Green Bay | 7. Wright St. |
| 4. Butler | 8. UW-Milwaukee |

ALL-MCC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	JERRY CARSTENSEN, UW-Green Bay	6-7/220	Jr.
F	JAVAN GOODMAN, Loyola (Ill.)	6-8/215	Jr.
F/G	BRYANT NOTREE, Illinois-Chicago	6-5/205	Sr.
G	KEION BROOKS, Wright State	6-3/173	Sr.
G	JERMAINE JACKSON, Detroit	6-4/208	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	THEO DIXON, Cleveland State	6-6/205	Soph.
F	MIKE MARSHALL, Butler	6-4/235	Jr.
C	INUS NORVILLE, Wright State	6-9/271	Sr.
G	JAMES MADISON, Cleveland State	6-2/175	Jr.
G	RASHAD PHILLIPS, Detroit	5-9/155	Jr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

JERMAINE JACKSON, G, Detroit



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

BRYANT NOTREE, F/G, Ill.-Chicago

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Keon Brooks, Cleveland State.

Best rebounder: Javan Goodman, Loyola (Ill.).

Best playmaker: Earl Brown, Loyola (Ill.).

Best defender: Jermaine Jackson, Detroit.

Best leaper: JoVonn Jefferson, Cleveland State.

Most versatile: Bryant Notree, Illinois-Chicago.

Most flamboyant: Rashad Phillips, Detroit.

Best NBA prospect: Javan Goodman, Loyola (Ill.).

MCC
MIDWESTERN COLLEGIATE CONFERENCE

4. BUTLER

Coach: Barry Collier (151-114, 9 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 22-11. MCC: 8-6/3rd. Lost to New Mexico in NCAA South first round.

Starters lost (5): Dan Dudukovich, F (7.4 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 28.3 mpg); Otis Frazier, G (9.4 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 1.3 spg, 24.24 mpg; transfer/Purdue-Calumet); Jon Neuhauser, F (12.6 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 50.6 FG%, 40.2 3-pt%, 29.1 mpg); Jeff Rogers, G (6.8 ppg, 71.0 FT%, 4.5 apg, 27.7 mpg); Rolf van Rijn, C (8.8 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 60.4 FG%, 2.0 bpg, 24.8 mpg).

Others lost: Matthew Graves, G (12.0 ppg, 86.8 FT%, 20.4 mpg).

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: Andrew Graves, G, 6-2/Jr.; Bjorn Gieseck, C, 6-10/Sr. (9.2 mpg); Michael Hicks, G, 6-3/Soph.; Andy Hirsch, G/F, 6-0/Sr.; LaVall Jordan, G, 6-3/Soph.; Mike Marshall, F, 6-4/Jr. (4.3 ppg, 49.5 FG%, 18.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Lewis Curry, F, 6-7/Fr.; Rylan Hainje, F, 6-6/Fr.; Thomas Jackson, G, 6-0/Fr.; Mike Moore, F/C, 6-9/Fr.; Ryan Murray, G, 6-2/Fr.

Strengths: Early on, the Bulldogs will rely on Mike Marshall and Bjorn Gieseck to provide leadership and an inside game. Barry Collier is one of the best coaches in the MCC. His ability to adapt to his players is a big reason Butler has been successful the past three seasons (79 victories, two NCAA bids). Freshmen Thomas Jackson and Rylan Hainje will see plenty of action. Jackson, a point guard, is quick and plays with poise.

Weaknesses: Losing five starters, including Otis Frazier—who unexpectedly transferred to Purdue-Calumet—leaves Collier with a new team. If Andy Hirsch isn't ready to handle the point, Collier will be forced to play Jackson. The Bulldogs won't be as big as they have been in the past. A rugged non-conference schedule could damage confidence.

Outlook: Butler has tradition, Collier and many questions. Who will take over the point? Who will score? This could be a rebuilding year, but Collier won't be satisfied with that. The Bulldogs likely won't make the NCAA Tournament, but they'll significantly shape the MCC race.

Last league title: 1997.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Indianapolis. **Home court:** Hinkle Fieldhouse (11,043).

5. LOYOLA

Coach: Larry Farmer (first year; 86-56 overall, 6 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-15. MCC: 6-8/T5th.

Starters lost (1): Donyale Bush (11.2 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 55.1 FG%, 72.5 FT%, 31.1 mpg).

Others lost: Dominic Okon, G.

Starters returning (4): Earl Brown, G, 6-1/Jr. (10.3 ppg, 5.6 apg, 2.2 spg, 77.9 FT%, 34.6 mpg); Javan Goodman, F, 6-8/Sr. (16.8 ppg, 8.4 rpg, 1.2 spg, 33.4 mpg); Mike Hare, G, 6-4/Soph. (7.9 ppg, 73.7 FT%, 43.0 3-PT%, 27.7 mpg); Damien McSwine, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (12.1 ppg, 74.6 FT%, 34.1 mpg).

Others returning: Carlos Gallo, G (11.2 mpg); Kevin Gill, F, 6-4/Sr.; Marc McDonald, G, 6-2/Soph.; Drew Petersen, F, 6-8/Sr.; Wayne Plowman, F, 6-7/Soph.; Brad Tice, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (11.0 mpg); Nduseo Udolwood, G, 6-0/Soph.

Top newcomers: Jarod Fry, F, 6-7/Fr.; Alvin Robinson, F/C, 6-8/Soph. (transfer/Iowa); Chris Williams, G, 6-3/Fr.

Strengths: Javan Goodman and Earl Brown should be two of the top players in the MCC. Goodman was the only MCC player to rank in the top three in scoring and rebounding. His size, strength and ability make him one of the top candidates for MCC MVP honors. Brown was only the fourth player in MCC history to lead the league in steals and assists. Damien McSwine is a slasher and

scorer. Larry Farmer, who takes over for Ken Burmeister, could help establish the consistency the Ramblers lacked.

Weaknesses: The inability to win a big game. Farmer's presence should help, but it may take him time to adjust to a new conference and staff. The reserves have size but little experience. Loyola's 15 victories last season were its most in 10 years, so this isn't a team accustomed to winning. As good as Goodman is, he'll need help in the middle.

Outlook: This is a strange team. If Farmer, who was an assistant at Rhode Island, can make the right adjustments, the Ramblers will contend for the title. But Farmer must have his team concentrate on defense first, and scoring second, to be a serious contender.

Last league title: 1987 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1985.

Site: Chicago. **Home court:** Joseph J. Gentile Center (5,200).

6. CLEVELAND STATE

Coach: Rollie Massimino (21-34, 2 years; 448-312 overall, 25 years; 20-10 NCAA Tournament record; won NCAA championship with Villanova in 1985).

1997-98 record: 12-15. MCC: 6-8/T5th.

Starters lost (1): Michael Bowens, F (10.4 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 35.1 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 27.8 mpg).

Others lost: Gary Brewster, F; Keldrick Brooks, G (11.7 mpg; transfer); Brian Hecavar, C (4.1 rpg, 74.3 FT%, 17.3 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Carter Arnett, F, 6-9/Sr. (6.2 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 26.1 mpg); Theo Dixon, F, 6-6/Soph. (10.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 76.9 FT%, 36.2 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 26.0 mpg); JoVonn Jefferson, F, 6-6/Sr. (4.9 ppg, 45.2 FG%, 19.2 mpg); James Madison, G, 6-2/Jr. (15.3 ppg, 84.4 FT%, 84.4 FT%, 32.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Steve Bowie, F, 6-8/Sr. (6.4 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 22.6 mpg); Anthony Jackson, F, 6-7/Soph. (10.4 mpg); Melvin McKey, G, 5-10/Sr. (4.3 ppg, 19.6 mpg); Leonidas Skoutaris, F, 6-7/Sr. (11.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: David Barrett, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Ricardo Crumble, C, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/DePaul; eligible second semester); Jamaal Harris, G, 6-1/Soph. (Prop 48); Sonny Johnson, F, 6-5/Fr.

Strengths: Experience and the knack for coming up with the big win. The latter can be attributed to the coaching of Rollie Massimino. James Madison is one of the top guards in the MCC, and look for JoVonn Jefferson to make an impact inside. With the addition of Ricardo Crumble, a transfer from DePaul who will be eligible the second semester, and freshman Sonny Johnson, one of the top prepsters in Ohio last season, the Vikings appear ready to make a run at the title.

Weaknesses: Massimino still lacks a big man. This team has lacked consistency in the past; it looks good one game, bad the next. The return of three starters doesn't guarantee improvement. Jamaal Harris, a Prop 48, will take over the point, but he may be rusty.

Outlook: The Vikings will be better, but how much? Some coaches say this is the sleeper team in the conference. But a conference title? That's probably too much to ask.

Last league title: 1993 (Mid-Continent).

Last NCAA appearance: 1986.

Site: Cleveland. **Home court:** Goodman Arena (13,610).

7. WRIGHT STATE

Coach: Ed Schilling (10-18, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 10-18. MCC: 3-11/T7th.

Starters lost (2): Thad Burton, C (12.5 ppg, 10.9 rpg, 50.6 FT%, 30.2 mpg); Steno Kos, F (5.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 58.1 FG%, 17.1 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (3): Keion Brooks, G, 6-3/Sr. (17.1 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 2.2 spg, 33.3 mpg); Sherman Curry, F,

6-5/Sr. (8.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 45.0 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 1.3 spg, 27.4 mpg); Brandon Pardon, G, 6-1/Soph. (6.1 ppg, 4.0 apg, 30.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Ryan Grose, F, 6-6/Soph. (48.0 FG%, 11.6 mpg); Bruno Petersons, C, 7-0/Soph.; Onome Scott-Emuakor, F, 6-7/Soph. (11.6 mpg); Steve Yeagle, F, 6-4/Jr. (10.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Louis Holmes, F, 6-4/Fr.; Marcus May, G, 5-10/Fr.; Kevin Melson, F, 6-6/Soph. (JC); Inus Norville, C/F, 6-9/Sr. (transfer/Massachusetts); Mike Peek, G, 6-1/Fr.

Strengths: Keion Brooks, a starter since the fifth game of his freshman year, is one of the top players in the conference. The Raiders return two other starters plus three other players who averaged more than 10 minutes a game. Two newcomers—Marcus May and Kevin Melson—should provide immediate help. May was one of the top players in Indiana last year, and Melson, who played high school ball in the Detroit Public School League, has a year of JC ball under his belt.

Weaknesses: This is Ed Schilling's second season as coach, so he's still learning. Replacing Thad Burton won't be easy. Bruno Petersons is tall but inexperienced. The frontcourt is not up to par with the rest of the conference, but the arrival of 271-pound UMass transfer Inus Norville will help.

Outlook: Like all of the teams that finished in the bottom half of the conference last year, Wright State will be better. But Brooks can't do it alone. A middle-of-the-pack finish is the best the Raiders can hope for.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1993.

Site: Dayton, Ohio. **Home court:** Ervin J. Nutter Center (10,635).

8. WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

Coach: Ric Cobb (20-62, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 3-24. MCC: 2-12/8th.

Starters lost (1): Pat McCabe, G (9.9 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 73.2 FT%, 37.9 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 26.6 mpg).

Others lost: Adrian Anderson, C; Tim Gittens, G, (5.6 ppg, 72.7 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 19.5 mpg); Kenny Parker Jr., F (9.5 mpg; transfer).

Starters returning (4): Chad Angeli, C, 6-9/Soph. (8.7 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 59.3 FG%, 74.6 FT%, 26.4 mpg); Cyrus Caldwell, G, 6-1/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 4.7 apg, 1.3 spg, 33.6 mpg); Jared Hardwick, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (8.5 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 1.2 spg, 25.3 mpg); Damion Ninkovic, C, 6-8/Soph. (9.0 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 21.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Tim Guilette, F, 6-5/Jr.; Dan Johnson, G, 6-2/Jr. (47.2 3-pt%, 14.5 mpg); Brian LeFave, F, 6-7/Jr.; Keith Seigel, F, 6-7/Sr. (3.0 rpg, 17.1 mpg); Larry Treadwell, G, 6-4/Sr.; Reggie Wheeler, G, 6-5/Soph.

Top newcomers: Shawn Fountain, G, 5-10/Jr. (JC); Ronnie Jones Jr., G, 5-9/Fr.; Kyle Kickert, C, 6-7/Fr. (RS); Roy King, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: This team was too young to win many games last season. Cyrus Caldwell will provide needed leadership. Coach Ric Cobb has good size in Chad Angeli and Damion Ninkovic. Jared Hardwick could surprise with his scoring. Cobb is excited about the three newcomers who should bolster the backcourt.

Weaknesses: The Panthers again will endure a learning process, but they will be better prepared this time around. They played better at the end of last season, but it may take time for newcomers Roy King, Ronnie Jones Jr. and Shawn Fountain to adapt. The lack of a true scoring threat will lead to offensive woes.

Outlook: Nine or 10 victories is all Cobb can expect. And if the Panthers win that many, the season will be considered a success. Next season, the Panthers can look to finish .500 or better.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Milwaukee. **Home court:** Klotsche Center (5,000).

1. IONA

Coach: Jeff Ruland (first year).

1997-98 record: 27-6. MAAC: 15-3/1st. Lost to Syracuse in NCAA South first round.

Starters lost (2): John McDonald, G (15.3 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 73.5 FT%, 1.2 spg, 29.0 mpg); Donell Mitchell, G (10.1 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 71.4 FT%, 1.3 spg, 28.0 mpg).

Others lost: Chris Harrison, G.

Starters returning (3): Kashif Hameed, C (15.3 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 73.5 FT%, 1.2 spg, 2.5 bpg, 29.0 mpg); Tariq Kirksay, F (14.2 ppg, 7.2 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 38.5 3-pt%, 2.3 spg, 30.0 mpg); Ivo Kresta, F (6.3 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 79.6 FT%, 17.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Steve Armistead, G, 6-3/Soph.; Javar Cheatham, G, 6-0/Soph.; Jamal Dunmore, F, 6-7, Sr.; Phil Grant, G/F, 6-7/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 20.0 mpg); Nakiea Miller, C, 6-9/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 68.0 FG%, 12.0 mpg); Jason Young, G, 6-2/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 71.4 FT%, 1.1 spg, 18.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Leland Norris, G, 6-2/Fr.; Ned Rolsma, C, 6-11/Fr. (RS/back); Dyree Wilson, G/F, 6-5/Fr.

Strengths: There's depth, balance, athleticism and defense. The Gaels have it all in their bid for a fourth consecutive MAAC regular-season title. Nine returnees averaged more than 12 minutes per game, and four averaged at least 10 points. Kashif Hameed (gunning to be the conference's first repeat player of the year since La Salle's Lionel Simmons) may return to his natural power forward position, combining with Ivo Kresta to give the Gaels an imposing front line. The switch would allow Nakiea Miller to step in at center. Tariq Kirksay is one of the conference's best all-around players.

Weaknesses: Both starters graduated, and Jason Young is the only returnee ready to move up from the bench. Dyree Wilson and Leland Norris will have chances to get minutes early and often. The free-throw shooting (68.6 percent last season) could improve, and the nuances of being a coach will require Jeff Ruland to adjust early in the season after spending the past three years as an assistant.

Outlook: Don't be fooled by any perceived weaknesses. They're merely quibbles. This team is loaded again. Iona was 12-0 at home last season, and if anyone other than the Gaels is representing the conference in the NCAA Tournament in March, it will be a major upset.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: New Rochelle, N.Y. **Home court:** John A. Mulcahy Center (3,200).

2. SIENA

Coach: Paul Hewitt (17-12, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 17-12. MAAC: 10-8/T3rd.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Jim Secretarski, G (4.0 ppg, 72.7 FT%, 12.0 mpg); Kolin Weaver, F/C (7.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 49.0 FG%, 76.9 FT%, 1.0 bpg, 18.0 mpg; transfer/Arkansas State).

Starters returning (3): Jim Cantamessa, F, 6-8/Jr. (14.0 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 47.7 FG%, 89.0 FT%, 56.7 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 27.0 mpg); Marcus Faison, F, 6-5/Jr. (16.1 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 51.7 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 42.5 3-pt%, 2.1 spg, 29.0 mpg); Melvin Freeny, G, 5-11/Sr. (7.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 77.2 FT%, 5.6 apg, 1.9 spg, 29.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Dave Deters, C, 6-10/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 79.5 FT%, 18.0 mpg); Brandon Fields, F, 6-6/Sr. (7.7 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 47.9 FG%, 73.5 FT%); Scott Knapp, G, 6-3/Soph. (12.1 ppg, 90.7 FG%, 38.5 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 1.2 spg, 24.0 mpg); Corey Osinski, F, 6-7/Jr. (7.9 ppg, 76.1 FT%, 20.0 mpg); Micha Ogburn, G, 6-4/Jr. (RS/injury).

Top newcomers: Dwayne Archbold, G/F, 6-4/Fr.; Jimmy Clinton, F, 6-8/Fr.; Dale Taylor, F/C, 6-9/Fr.

Strengths: Under coach Paul Hewitt, Siena games became 78-rpm basketball last season. Jim Cantamessa, who led the nation in 3-point percentage, and MAAC rookie of the year Scott Knapp are dynamic 3-point threats. Conference assistant leader Melvin Freeny is in charge at the point. The most notable returnee is Hewitt, who is back after a 17-12 season that put him in the middle of the race for the top job at St. John's. Crowds can reach 10,000 at Albany's Pepsi Arena, providing the Saints with a huge home-court advantage.

Weaknesses: A frontcourt that has been weak the past few seasons now is riddled with inexperience. Freshmen Jimmy Clinton, Dale Taylor and Dwayne Archbold are likely to make an immediate impact. Postseason survival is linked to defense, and Siena can't finish last in the MAAC

in that category again.

Outlook: The Saints will challenge Iona for MAAC supremacy, but they still might be a year away from finally reaching the top of the heap. A trip to the NIT for the first time since their 1994 run to that tourney's final four is a good bet. Then the big-name schools will be lining up again for Hewitt's services.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1989.

Site: Albany, N.Y. **Home court:** Pepsi Arena (15,500).

3. RIDER

Coach: Don Harnum (18-10, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 18-10. MAAC: 12-6/2nd. Lost to Penn State in NIT first round.

Starters lost (1): Tata Toumou, F (5.4 ppg, 48.0 FG%, 81.3 FT%, 46.0 3-pt%, 16.4 mpg).

Others lost: Derrick Perry, F (8.6 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 45.4 FG%, 2.0 spg).

Starters returning (4): Greg Burston, G, 6-4/Sr. (14.1 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 45.2 FG%, 36.3 3-pt%, 31.6 mpg); Kevin McPeck, C, 6-8/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 28.3 mpg); Kevin Finebrock, G, 5-9/Sr. (9.7 ppg, 84.2 FT%, 36.5 3-pt%, 26.2 mpg); Ken Lacey, F, 6-9/Jr. (8.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 80.0 FT%, 23.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Jonathon McClark, F/C, 6-7/Jr. (5.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 57.3 FG%, 19.3 mpg); Michael Crawford, G, 6-0, Soph. (4.8 ppg, 70.6 FT%, 17.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Winston Grey, F/C, 6-8/Fr.; Dave Hutchinson, G, 6-4/Fr.; Mario Porter, F, 6-6/Fr.; Mike Scott, G, 6-4/Fr.; R.J. Wicks, G, 6-4/Fr.; Mark Van Sickle, C, 6-10/Fr. (RS).

Strengths: Four starters, including three seniors, return from the MAAC's best defensive team (65.8 ppg) to make another run at the postseason. The Broncos were the MAAC's great unknown last year because of their move from the Northeast Conference, but opponents found out the hard way that Rider would not be pushed around. Kevin McPeck and Ken Lacey lead a physical frontcourt, and Greg Burston and Kevin Finebrock comprise the conference's most dependable guard tandem. Michael Crawford is expected to become more of a scoring threat.

Weaknesses: Depth is a question mark. The offense tends to stagnate because of turnovers, and the inside players need to take better care of the ball.

Outlook: Even though they made their NIT debut last season at Penn State, the Broncos were stunned by their upset loss to Manhattan in the MAAC quarterfinals. Rider was the first No. 2 seed to lose in the opening round in 11 years. The team's seniors are poised for another push at the top of the conference, and there could be another NIT trip.

Last league title: 1994 (Northeast).

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Lawrenceville, N.J. **Home court:** Alumni Gym (1,650).

4. NIAGARA

Coach: Joe Mihalich (first year).

1997-98 record: 14-13. MAAC: 10-8/T3rd.

Starters lost (2): Jeff O'Connor, G (9.2 ppg, 82.1 FT%, 40.5 3-pt%, 28.3 mpg); Jermaine Young, C (12.4 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 60.6 FG%, 70.9 FT%, 29.4 mpg).

Others lost: Patrick McNamara, F.

Starters returning (3): Jeremiah Johnson, G, 6-0/Sr. (10.0 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 4.7 apg, 1.9 spg, 28.8 mpg); Mike Piwerka, F, 6-9/Sr. (5.6 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 74.2 FT%, 21.1 mpg); Alvin Young, G, 6-3/Sr. (15.7 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 47.8 FG%, 79.4 FT%, 36.5 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 31.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Nate Bernosky, F, 6-4/Jr. (15.2 mpg); Luke Dobrich, G, 6-0/Jr. (76.2 FT%, 38.7 3-pt%, 13.7 mpg); Kevin Jobity, C, 6-10/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 60.5 FG%, 1.9 bpg, 26.7 mpg); Akbar Waheed, G, 6-3/Sr.

Top newcomers: Christos Defoudis, F, 6-9/Fr.; Terry Edwards, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Daryl Greene, G, 6-0/Fr.

Strengths: Four senior starters could have Niagara in the title hunt for the first time since 1993. Alvin Young was an instant hit after transferring from junior college and will challenge for the conference scoring crown. Jeremiah Johnson is a flashy point guard, and Kevin Jobity is a solid finisher in the low post. Mike Piwerka is a strong rebounder, but he needs to provide more offense.

Weaknesses: Johnson has grown up at the point, but he still can revert to stretches of erratic play that short-circuit the offense. Small forward is a question mark, with JC transfer Terry Edwards expected to get the bulk of the minutes. And it remains to be seen how Joe Mihalich, a career assistant, will do in his debut as coach, replacing

BY MIKE HARRINGTON
Buffalo News

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Iona | 6. Marist |
| 2. Siena | 7. Canisius |
| 3. Rider | 8. Manhattan |
| 4. Niagara | 9. Fairfield |
| 5. Loyola (Md.) | 10. St. Peter's |

ALL-MAAC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	MARCUS FAISON, Siena	6-5/175	Jr.
C	KASHIF HAMEED, Iona	6-8/230	Sr.
F	TARIQ KIRKSAY, Iona	6-6/215	Jr.
G	JASON ROWE, Loyola (Md.)	5-10/170	Jr.
G	ALVIN YOUNG, Niagara	6-3/174	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	JAMIE CAMMAERT, Canisius	6-5/225	Sr.
F	JIM CANTAMESSA, Siena	6-8/200	Jr.
C	KEVIN McPECK, Rider	6-8/225	Sr.
G	GREG BURSTON, Rider	6-4/180	Sr.
G	BO LARRAGAN, Marist	6-2/180	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

KASHIF HAMEED, C, Iona



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

JERMAINE CLARKE, G/F, Fairfield

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Jim Cantamessa, Siena.

Best rebounder: Roderick Platt, Loyola (Md.).

Best playmaker: Jason Rowe, Loyola (Md.).

Best defender: Kashif Hameed, Iona.

Best leaper: Marcus Faison, Siena.

Most versatile: Tariq Kirksay, Iona.

Most flamboyant: Jeremiah Johnson, Niagara.

Best NBA prospect: Kashif Hameed, Iona.



the popular Jack Armstrong.

Outlook: Although he's a rookie coach, Mihalich is expected to win right away. He will suffer heavy graduation losses and endure a major rebuilding project starting with the 1999-2000 season. If the Purple Eagles are going to win, the time is now.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1970.

Site: Niagara, N.Y. **Home courts:** Gallagher Center (3,200); Marine Midland Arena (19,500).

5. LOYOLA (MD.)

Coach: Dino Gaudio (12-16, 1 year; 48-88 overall, 5 years). **1997-98 record:** 12-16. MAAC: 9-9/T5th.

Starters lost (1): Mike Powell, G (24.2 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 47.3 FG%, 83.3 FT%, 2.1 spg, 3.1 apg, 34.0 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Ryan Blosser, G, 6-4/Soph. (4.7 ppg, 25.0 mpg); Brian Carroll, F, 6-8/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 25.6 mpg); Roderick Platt, C, 6-10/Sr. (12.2 ppg, 9.1 rpg, 53.4 FG%, 31.0 mpg); Jason Rowe, G, 5-10/Jr. (18.1 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 47.1 FG%, 81.7 FT%, 36.6 3-pt%, 3.0 spg, 5.4 apg, 36.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Bill Boffa, F, 6-4/Jr.; Jamal Hunter, G, 6-5/Soph. (9.4 ppg, 46.3 FG%, 38.9 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 21.0 mpg); Blanchard Hurd, F, 6-7/Jr.; Mike Langley, G, 6-1/Soph.; Brant Mack, G, 6-1/Soph.; Apostolis Nasiou, F, 6-7/Soph. (52.9 FG%, 15.0 mpg); James Tallarico, G, 5-11/Soph.

Top newcomers: Jerome Adams, G, 5-11/Jr. (JC); Damien Jenifer, G, 6-0/Fr.; Melvin Robinson, F, 6-4/Fr.; Clifford Strong, F, 6-7/Fr.; Anthony Walker, G, 6-3/Fr.

Strengths: The MAAC's best inside-outside combination resides in Baltimore with point guard Jason Rowe and bruising Roderick Platt. Rowe is the conference's top returning scorer, Platt the top rebounder. Jamal Hunter, Brian Carroll and Ryan Blosser combined to make 43 starts as freshmen, and all figure to make plenty more appearances as sophomores. New York standout Clifford Strong heads a terrific recruiting class. A key intangible could be the return of Blanchard Hurd, who was out most of the past two seasons because of injuries and academic troubles.

Weaknesses: The Greyhounds committed more than 19 turnovers per game last season, a figure that must drop if they expect to contend. Rowe must start playing like an upperclassman, instead of forcing plays like freshmen often do. The turnovers created plenty of easy baskets for the opposition, as the Greyhounds gave up nearly 80 ppg.

Outlook: The Greyhounds will continue to drive coach Dino Gaudio crazy with spurts of great play followed by spurts of out-of-control antics. Loyola won't win a title this season, but Platt is the only senior. Look out next year.

Last league title: 1994. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1994.

Site: Baltimore. **Home court:** Reitz Arena (3,000).

6. MARIST

Coach: Dave Magarity (168-173, 12 years; 228-249 overall, 17 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 11-17. MAAC: 7-11/T7th.

Starters lost (2): Joe Taylor, G (13.0 mpg); Bryan Whittle, F (8.7 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 22.0 mpg).

Others lost: Sebastian Bellin, C; Dan Berggren, F; Dennis Keenan, F (59.5 FG%, 15.0 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Tomasz Ciebleak, C, 6-9/Jr. (9.4 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 45.2 FG%, 71.3 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 1.3 bpg, 28.0 mpg); Bobby Joe Hatton, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.9 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 47.1 FG%, 3.3 apg, 1.5 spg, 35.0 mpg); Bo Larragan, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.1 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 88.2 FT%, 36.6 3-pt%, 3.6 apg, 1.3 spg, 36.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Thomas Kenny, C, 6-10/Jr. (4.3 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 46.7 FG%, 13.5 mpg); Joe McCurdy, F, 6-5/Jr. (8.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 26.0 mpg); Donald Vale, F, 6-4/Soph. (RS).

Top newcomers: Stephen Grant, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Jason Hastings, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Sean Kennedy, G, 6-2/Fr.; Rick Smith, G, 6-3/Fr.; Mark Prosser, C, 6-5/Fr.

Strengths: Not much was expected from a team coming off a 6-22 season, but last season the Red Foxes relied on the backcourt of Bo Larragan and Bobby Joe Hatton to surprise plenty of visitors to Poughkeepsie. Thomas Kenney and Joe McCurdy made great strides in the second half and should be ready for a full season this time. Dave Magarity's recruiting class is first-rate; expect Stephen Grant and Jason Hastings to contribute up front. **Weaknesses:** The Red Foxes were the MAAC's worst rebounding team and had lost 23 in a row on the road until upsetting Canisius last season. Both those areas must improve if Marist wants to sneak into the upper half of the conference. Other than Hatton and Larragan, scor-

ing will be limited.

Outlook: This is a building program still adjusting to its move to the MAAC. Rider was an experienced team when it joined the MAAC; Marist had just been riddled by graduation, and the difference was obvious. Another strong recruiting class could have the Red Foxes prowling in the high-rent district soon.

Last league title: 1988 (Northeast).

Last NCAA appearance: 1987.

Site: Poughkeepsie, N.Y. **Home court:** McCann Center (3,900).

7. CANISIUS

Coach: Mike MacDonald (13-14, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 13-14. MAAC: 9-9/T5th.

Starters lost (1): Kevin Thompson, G (12.7 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 76.0 FT%, 3.7 apg, 35.0 mpg).

Others lost: Fred Dupree, F/C (56.4 FG%, 12.0 mpg); Mike McCarthy, G (6.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 71.1 FT%, 1.0 spg, 24.0 mpg); Dennis Wilson, G.

Starters returning (4): Jamie Cammaert, F, 6-5/Sr. (13.9 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 44.7 3-pt%, 32.0 mpg); Darren Fenn, C, 6-10/Soph. (6.0 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 17.0 mpg); Keith Lambkin, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 72.0 FT%, 29.0 mpg); Kevin Worley, G, 6-2/Sr. (8.7 ppg, 85.5 FT%, 40.6 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 32.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Clive Bentic, G, 6-0/Soph.; Dale Sawyers, F, 6-8/Jr. (68.0 FG%, 12.0 mpg); Matt Tribul, C, 6-9/Jr. (16.0 mpg); Damon Young, G, 6-1/Soph. **Top newcomers:** Alex Barnhill, F, 6-4/Fr.; Andrew Bush, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS); Andre Jackson, F, 6-5/Fr.; Dorian McClure, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Jamie Cammaert and Keith Lambkin can be dominant for stretches, and Kevin Worley was the MAAC's most improved player last season. All four players are seniors, and they are the only remaining players from the Griffs' 1996 NCAA Tournament team. Depth in the frontcourt should be much better with the arrival of three solid freshmen, including redshirt Andrew Bush.

Weaknesses: Canisius had one of the MAAC's weakest offenses last season, and the team's defensive yield went up nearly 12 points per game. Center is unsettled, with promising sophomore Darren Fenn battling junior Matt Tribul. The team also faces some other big questions. Who is the go-to player when Canisius needs a basket? Who steps in if Worley encounters foul trouble? Lack of depth became a problem last season when the schedule turned brutal, and Canisius went from 9-4 to 9-10 in just 12 days.

Outlook: The Griffs tended to play one good half per game last season, and the habit caught up to them in the latter part of the schedule. There need to be more 40-minute efforts for Canisius to sneak up the standings.

Last league title: 1994. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.

Site: Buffalo. **Home courts:** Koessler Athletic Center (1,800); Marine Midland Arena (19,500).

8. MANHATTAN

Coach: John Leonard (21-35, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 12-17. MAAC: 7-11/T7th.

Starters lost (3): Travis Lyons, G (16.7 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 62.1 FG%, 72.8 FT%, 33.0 mpg); Steve McDowell, G (10.0 ppg, 70.4 FT%, 38.2 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 30.0 mpg); Brendan O'Brien, F (10.2 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 76.3 FT%, 28.0 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (2): Alvin Anderson, G, 6-2/Soph. (9.6 ppg, 3.8 apg, 29.0 mpg); Mars Mellish, G, 6-1/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 1.0 spg, 26.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Durelle Brown, F, 6-7/Soph. (5.8 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 61.2 FG%, 19.0 mpg); Kyle Crandall, C, 6-10/Sr. (11.0 mpg); Kyle Dye, G, 6-4/Sr. (52.0 FG%); Phil Lane, G, 5-11/Jr. (77.4 FT%).

Top newcomers: Justin Boeker, C, 6-9/Fr.; Tydrayll Coleman, F, 6-6/Fr.; Noah Coughlin, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Ken Kavanagh, F, 6-9/Jr. (transfer/San Jose State); Phil Murray, F/C, 6-8/Soph. (transfer/Bowling Green).

Strengths: Alvin Anderson and Mars Mellish had good freshman seasons, and they will make this team dangerous, as they proved during last year's run to the conference tournament semifinals. John Leonard's best recruiting class in his three seasons, led by Justin Boeker, bodes well for the future.

Weaknesses: Three players graduated and took 37 points and 14 rebounds per game with them from what already was one of the MAAC's weakest offensive teams. The biggest loss was all-conference forward Travis Lyons. It will be difficult for the Jaspers to replace these players. Manhattan was strong defensively largely because of Lyons in the low post. Ken Kavanagh will have to make up for his

absence in that role.

Outlook: The Jaspers will have to slow down the tempo and win plenty of low-scoring games to contend this season. But the experience they gain will be invaluable to a program trying to reclaim the prominence it had earlier in the decade.

Last league title: 1995.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Riverdale, N.Y. **Home court:** Draddy Gym (3,000).

9. FAIRFIELD

Coach: Tim O'Toole (first year).

1997-98 record: 12-15. MAAC: 7-11/T7th.

Starters lost (2): Didier Boucard, F (10.3 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 55.7 FG%, 2.1 bpg, 1.6 spg, 28.0 mpg); Shane Miller, G/F (9.0 ppg, 82.0 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 25.0 mpg).

Others lost: John Tice, G/F (11.9 ppg, 1.2 spg, 25.0 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Kyle Commodore, G, 5-11/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 73.3 FT%, 2.0 spg, 23.0 mpg); Sunday Eniojukan, C, 6-7/Jr. (6.3 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 53.2 FG%, 21.0 mpg); Darren Phillip, F, 6-6/Jr. (10.7 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 25.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Andy Buzbee, F, 6-6/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 72.1 FT%, 16.0 mpg); Boo Farrow, G, 6-0/Soph. (4.7 ppg, 17.0 mpg); Mike Horan, C, 6-9/Sr. (3.2 rpg, 16.0 mpg); Leroy Robertson, G, 6-3/185, Soph (5.7 ppg, 74.1 FT%, 16.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Jermaine Clark, G/F, 6-5/Fr.

Strengths: Darren Phillip is ready to emerge as one of the conference's strongest frontcourt threats, and there is depth behind him. Three freshmen contributed last year, and solid off-guard Jermaine Clarke should be a standout this season. He came to Fairfield after originally making an oral commitment to St. Bonaventure.

Weaknesses: After Phillip, it's uncertain who will be a consistent scorer. Nor does there appear to be a reliable zone-buster. Center has been a perennial problem, and the Stags were awful at the line at times last season.

Outlook: Tim O'Toole has a big challenge in his first season at the helm of his alma mater. He needs to find some beef up front if the Stags are going to claw back to the top of the MAAC.

Last league title: 1996 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Fairfield, Conn. **Home court:** Alumni Hall (2,479).

10. ST. PETER'S

Coach: Rodger Blind (36-46, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 8-19. MAAC: 4-14/10th.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Ville Malaska, C (transfer/Philadelphia Textile); Diamond Navarro, G (14.4 mpg); Henry Rascoe, F (6.9 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 15.4 mpg; transfer/Howard).

Starters returning (5): Kalief Allen, G, 6-1/Jr. (5.5 ppg, 3.0 apg, 1.1 spg, 22.4 mpg); Ricky Bellinger, G/F, 6-2/Jr. (16.5 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 1.0 spg, 31.5 mpg); Rich Brown, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 49.7 FG%, 21.7 mpg); Jamar Hunter, G, 6-0/Sr. (16.2 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 80.5 FT%, 3.3 apg, 1.3 spg, 33.7 mpg); Kamaal McQueen, F, 6-5/Soph. (8.5 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 57.6 FG%, 24.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Alvin Bowen, F, 6-7/Jr.; Jake Holmes, C, 6-11/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 9.1 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 27.3 mpg); Jermaine Johnson, F, 6-7/Jr.; Antoine Orr, G, 5-9/Soph. (70.8 FT%, 9.8 mpg); Keith Sellers, F, 6-5/Soph. (14.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Rodney Rodgers, F, 6-7/Soph. (transfer/Drexel); Damian Spencer, F/G, 6-4/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Ricky Bellinger and Jamar Hunter provide scoring, but both endured mighty struggles from the perimeter that never were solved last season. Bowling Green transfer Jake Holmes finished as the MAAC's No. 2 rebounder when he became eligible in the second semester, and he should be a formidable center this season. Kamaal McQueen is a rugged force inside, and there is good depth at forward and center.

Weaknesses: This team has a lot of options. But will any of them produce on a nightly basis? It was a season-long question coach Rodger Blind couldn't answer last year. Bellinger and Hunter felt the pressure of having to produce most of the offense and couldn't handle it. That doesn't appear to have changed.

Outlook: Another long winter in Jersey City. The Peacocks will be better, but they're still too young to overtake any other team in the league.

Last league title: 1987. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1995.

Site: Jersey City, N.J. **Home court:** Yanitelli Center (3,200).

1. OLD DOMINION

Coach: Jeff Capel (73-54, 4 years; 152-117 overall, 8 years; 1-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 12-16. Colonial: 8-8/4th.

Starters lost (1): Brion Dunlap, G (79.3 FT%, 5.6 app, 30.5 mpg).

Others lost: Curtis Pass, F (12.1 mpg; transfer); Paul Reed, C (transfer/Central Florida).

Starters returning (4): Reggie Bassette, C, 6-9/Sr. (7.6 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 1.7 bpg, 26.4 mpg); Cal Bowdler, F, 6-10/Sr. (10.2 ppg, 8.8 rpg, 2.4 bpg, 29.6 mpg); Mike Byers, G, 6-2/Sr. (12.7 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 73.5 FT%, 37.9 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.3 spg, 31.0 mpg); Mark Poag, F, 6-6/Sr. (15.3 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 82.8 FT%, 47.4 3-pt%, 28.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Freddie Bryant, G, 6-3/Jr.; Michael Williams, G, 6-3/Soph. (5.0 ppg, 17.6 mpg); Skipper Youngblood, C/F, 6-8/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 49.3 FG%, 22.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Pierre Greene, G, 6-2/Fr.; Lavar Hemphill, G, 6-3/Fr.; Clifton Jones, F, 6-7/Soph. (transfer/Duquesne); Andre McCullum, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/NC State).

Strengths: The most experienced team in the CAA often ends up as champion. And it's liable to happen again as the Monarchs return players that accounted for 91 percent of their scoring and 86 percent of their rebounding. ODU has five seniors, each of whom has been a four-year member of the rotation. Mark Poag supplies long-range shooting. Mike Byers is a creative wing. Reggie Bassette and Skipper Youngblood give ODU interior defense and rebounding. Cal Bowdler is 6-10, but he can hit the 3-pointer. With superior size for this level, it should be tough to score against ODU.

Weaknesses: For some reason, this group didn't mesh last season, finishing with a disappointing .500 winning percentage in league play. When Poag doesn't hit from the perimeter, there aren't many other alternatives against a zone. Can Michael Williams run the show?

Outlook: The Monarchs should dominate inside, where they're expected to get a strong push from NC State transfer Andre McCullum. The X-factor may be Bowdler, a hybrid player with post man size and perimeter skills. If he turns in a solid season, ODU will win another title.

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Norfolk, Va. **Home courts:** The Scope (10,239); ODU Field House (4,855).

2. JAMES MADISON

Coach: Sherman Dillard (11-16, 1 year; 40-68 overall, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 11-16. Colonial: 6-10/15th.

Starters lost (1): Lamont Boozer, F/C (8.7 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 56.2 FG%, 28.9 mpg).

Others lost: Riley Trone, G (4.1 ppg, 18.5 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Eugene Atkinson, F, 6-5/Sr. (14.2 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 76.9 FT%, 37.0 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 32.3 mpg); Ned Felton, G, 5-11/Sr. (7.5 ppg, 1.0 spg, 30.0 mpg); Jamar Perry, G, 6-4/Jr. (14.0 ppg, 80.0 FT%, 38.2 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 32.4 mpg); Rob Strickland, C, 6-10/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 54.7 FG%, 1.6 bpg, 20.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Dwayne Braxton, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 13.4 mpg); Fred Boyd, F, 6-7/Sr. (9.2 mpg); Chatney Howard, F, 6-4/Sr. (RS/back); Kevan Johnson, F, 6-6/Jr. (3.1 rpg, 48.6 FG%, 13.1 mpg); Marvin Zaandam, F, 6-8/Sr.

Top newcomers: Clayton Brown, F, 6-7/Fr.; Charlie Hatter, G, 6-4/Fr.; Tim Lyle, F, 6-8/Fr.; Jabari Outtz, G, 6-0/Jr.

Strengths: Wing men Chatney Howard and Eugene Atkinson are hard to guard because of their quality outside shots and no-fear slashes to the hoop. Add Jamar Perry, one of the CAA's most surprisingly successful backcourt players last season, and JMU could be the Colonial's most difficult team to contain. Rob Strickland has an ACC center's body and is developing an offensive game.

Weaknesses: Howard missed all but five games last season with a back injury, but he expects to be 100 percent this year. Strickland needs help inside, and it will be provided mostly by newcomers. Point man Ned Felton is a good ballhandler and can defend, but defenses don't concern themselves with his shooting.

Outlook: If Madison can find a big body or two to help Strickland, it will challenge ODU. The Ducks will be wing-oriented, featuring Howard, Atkinson and Perry on offense, but they also must find a way to defend the CAA's inside-based clubs. Look for a bunch of high-scoring games.

Last league title: 1994.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Harrisonburg, Va. **Home court:** JMU Convocation Center (7,156).

3. UNC WILMINGTON

Coach: Jerry Wainwright (65-52, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 20-11. Colonial: 13-3/1st. Lost to Wake Forest in NIT first round.

Starters lost (1): Mark Byington, G (11.6 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 80.6 FT%, 40.1 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 32.7 mpg).

Others lost: Keith Spencer, F (7.4 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 76.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 25.8 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Billy Donlon, G, 6-1/Sr. (6.9 ppg, 5.6 app, 1.1 spg, 35.9 mpg); Marcus Green, F, 6-9/Soph. (3.3 rpg, 15.6 mpg); Oleg Kojenets, C, 6-10/Sr. (6.1 ppg, 45.7 FG%, 82.1 FT%, 17.9 mpg); Stan Simmons, G, 5-11/Sr. (15.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 45.7 FG%, 71.3 FT%, 39.9 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 30.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Danny Dahl, G, 6-4/Jr. (10.4 mpg); Victor Ebong, F, 6-8/Jr. (10.2 mpg); Michael Gibbs, F, 6-8/Sr.; Tadearl Pratt, G, 6-5/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 40.0 3-pt%, 13.9 mpg).

Top newcomer: Ramond Perine, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Finally, coach Jerry Wainwright's defensive-minded program is getting some deserved respect. Stan Simmons might be the best little man in the country. He led UNCW in scoring, rebounding and blocks last season. Billy Donlon won't turn heads with athletic ability like Simmons, but he's rock solid at the point. Under Wainwright, the Seahawks make few mistakes and cause plenty with a defense that always is among the CAA's best.

Weaknesses: Mark Byington did some of everything for UNCW for four years, and now he's gone. The imposing dimensions of Oleg Kojenets suggest he's capable of bigger things in the paint. The Seahawks need a scorer to take the heat off Simmons.

Outlook: Even when the parts don't look so hot, Wainwright finds a way to make his team a contender. The Seahawks come off their first postseason appearance (NIT) and might duplicate that achievement if Tadearl Pratt becomes a consistent double-figure scorer. The Seahawks have more quickness than they've had in years, but offense, as usual, is the major question.

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Wilmington, N.C. **Home court:** Trask Coliseum (6,100).

4. GEORGE MASON

Coach: Jim Larranaga (9-18, 1 year; 207-187 overall, 14 years).

1997-98 record: 9-18. Colonial: 6-10/15th.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Leighton Henry, F (quit team).

Starters returning (5): Nsilo Abraham, F, 6-6/Jr. (4.5 ppg, 51.1 FG%, 18.8 mpg); Ahmad Dorsett, G, 6-2/Jr. (9.8 ppg, 40.5 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 30.6 mpg); George Evans, F, 6-7/Soph. (13.4 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 1.5 spg, 1.5 bpg, 33.0 mpg); Erik Herring, F, 6-5/Soph. (10.1 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 1.6 spg, 29.6 mpg); Jason Miskiri, G, 6-2/Sr. (15.9 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 70.2 FT%, 4.4 app, 1.9 spg, 35.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Lee Brown, G, 6-1/Sr. (6.2 ppg, 35.0 3-pt%, 21.5 mpg); Avery Carey, F, 6-5/Sr. (RS/back); Tom Carroll, G, 6-2/Sr.; Nik Mirich, C, 6-9/Sr. (3.7 rpg, 19.7 mpg); Tremaine Price, G, 5-8/Soph. (16.9 mpg).

BY JOHN O'CONNOR
Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Old Dominion | 6. Richmond |
| 2. James Madison | 7. Wm. & Mary |
| 3. UNC Wilmington | 8. East Carolina |
| 4. George Mason | 9. Virginia |
| 5. American | Commonwealth |

ALL-CAA

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	EUGENE ATKINSON, James Madison	6-5/195	Sr.
F	GEORGE EVANS, George Mason	6-7/215	Soph.
F	CHATNEY HOWARD, James Madison	6-4/190	Sr.
G	RANDY BRACY, William & Mary	6-1/180	Sr.
G	STAN SIMMONS, UNC Wilmington	5-11/185	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	CAL BOWDLER, Old Dominion	6-10/245	Sr.
F	MARK POAG, Old Dominion	6-6/195	Sr.
F	DAVE SMALL, American	6-6/220	Sr.
G	JONATHAN BAKER, Richmond	6-1/180	Sr.
G	JASON MISKIRI, George Mason	6-2/175	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

STAN SIMMONS, G, UNC Wilmington



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

ELVADAS JOCYS, F, East Carolina

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Mark Poag, Old Dominion.

Best rebounder: Cal Bowdler, Old Dominion.

Best playmaker: Billy Donlon, UNC Wilmington.

Best defender: Jarion Childs, American.

Best leaper: Stan Simmons, UNC Wilmington.

Most versatile: Chatney Howard, James Madison.

Most flamboyant: Jason Miskiri, George Mason.

Best NBA prospect: Chatney Howard, James Madison.



Top newcomers: Rob Anderson, F, 6-5/Fr.; Keith Holdan, F, 6-6/Jr. (transfer/Campbell); Terrence Nixon, F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48); Quilinius Randall, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: Jason Miskiri and George Evans are two of the league's finest players. Although each is in only his second season of Division I competition, don't assume that they're inexperienced. Miskiri, who is best in the open court, played junior college ball. Evans, a banger with a shooting touch, spent a few years getting his game together in the military before signing with GMU.

Weaknesses: Coach Jim Larranaga needs help from unproven players to assist Miskiri and Evans. The Patriots are especially vulnerable inside. They finished last among CAA teams in rebounding last season and also brought up the rear in field-goal percentage defense. GMU needs more size.

Outlook: The Patriots stayed close last season, but often dropped tight games. They're still a couple of players away from winning a title, but an ascension in the standings is expected because of Miskiri and Evans. The team must find a way to offer more inside defensive resistance. A hot Miskiri can win games, but he shot 38.6 percent last season.

Last league title: 1989.

Last NCAA appearance: 1989.

Site: Fairfax, Va. **Home court:** Patriot Center (10,000).

5. AMERICAN

Coach: Art Perry (9-19, 1 year; 16-39 overall, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 9-19. Colonial: 5-11/T7th.

Starters lost (1): Nathan Smith, G (16.3 ppg, 86.0 FT%, 39.4 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 33.8 mpg).

Others lost: Stephen Clayton, F (9.4 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Matt Brown, G/F, 6-6/Sr. (8.9 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 28.6 mpg); Jarion Childs, G, 6-0/Jr. (8.8 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 74.1 FT%, 3.3 apg, 2.6 spg, 31.3 mpg); Dave Small, F, 6-6/Sr. (10.1 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 77.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 33.0 mpg); Salio-Binet Telly, C, 6-8/Soph. (7.7 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 47.8 FG%, 1.6 bpg, 29.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Ossie Jones, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (6.3 ppg, 77.1 FT%, 20.2 mpg); Henry Marquis, C/F, 6-9/Jr. (10.6 mpg); David Olsen, G, 5-9/Jr.; Jim Spadafore, G, 6-0/Sr.

Top newcomers: Hasheem Alexander, G, 6-3/Fr.; Patrick Doctor, C/F, 6-9/Fr.; Keith Gray, F, 6-8/Fr.; Bobby Thompson, G, 6-4/Fr.; Omar Vanderhorst, G, 6-1/Fr.; Bryan Wynn, F/C, 6-8/Fr.

Strengths: For years, the Eagles have been manhandled in the paint. But that trend might change with Dave Small, Matt Brown and Salio-Binet Telly on the front line. There's not much bulk there, but AU does have interior experience. Ossie Jones can give American a spark with his assortment of moves. Point man Jarion Childs is a defensive gem and a quiet leader.

Weaknesses: The Eagles require more toughness to make them a quality road team. Nathan Smith, a terrific 3-point threat during four seasons, has graduated, and there's no obvious replacement in that department. Six freshmen are on board, an indication that Art Perry's team might lack seasoned subs.

Outlook: The Eagles could climb into the top half of the standings if Small can expand his low-post game and Telly increases his strength sufficiently to handle heavier centers. With Smith's departure, there's no go-to guy offensively. Experience should get AU over .500 in CAA play.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Washington, D.C. **Home court:** Bender Arena (5,000).

6. RICHMOND

Coach: John Beilein (23-8, 1 year; 370-213 overall, 20 years; 1-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 23-8 Colonial: 12-4/3rd. Lost to Washington in NCAA East second round.

Starters lost (2): Eric Poole, C (11.6 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 55.5 FG%, 34.5 mpg); Jarod Stevenson, F (19.1 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 49.6 FG%, 79.3 FT%, 47.1 3-pt%, 1.1 bpg, 35.8 mpg).

Others lost: Carlos Cueto, G (13.1 mpg); Daryl Oliver, G (6.3 ppg, 81.7 FT%, 18.8 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Jonathan Baker, G, 6-1/Sr. (9.6 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 76.6 FT%, 44.7 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 30.9 mpg); Marseilles Brown, G, 5-9/Jr. (9.6 ppg, 76.9 FT%, 3.7 apg, 28.4 mpg); Nick Patrick, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 25.6 mpg).

Other returnees: David Hensel, C, 6-9/Sr.; Rick Houston, F, 6-4/Soph. (76.2 FT%, 9.4 mpg); Scott Kauffman, C, 6-9/Soph.; Tyler Phillips, F, 6-4/Soph.

Top newcomers: Marques Cunningham, G, 6-0/Fr.; Kinte Smith, F, 6-5/Soph. (transfer/George Washington); Charles Stephens, F, 6-5/Fr.; Scott Ungerer, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: Jonathan Baker shoots long-range jumpers as well as anybody in the league. Marseilles Brown can hit the "3" and drive defenses nuts with his quickness. Nick Patrick's speed allows him to get around most CAA forwards. Coach John Beilein has won 20 or more games at four levels of college basketball, and he led the Spiders to last season's CAA crown and a first-round NCAA tournament upset of South Carolina.

Weaknesses: The four seniors who elevated UR to the top of the CAA last season are gone, including player of the year Jarod Stevenson. The Spiders not only are missing Stevenson, their primary scorer, they also lack an established inside presence. Brown is out of control occasionally.

Outlook: If Beilein can take the Spiders back to the NCAAs, he'll be coaching in one of the top-level conferences next season. More than half of his team is newcomers. UR will rely heavily on George Washington transfer Kinte Smith to produce points, then hope Brown settles down at the point and big men David Hensel and Scott Kauffman become quality Division I players.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Richmond, Va. **Home court:** Robins Center (9,171).

7. WILLIAM & MARY

Coach: Charlie Woollum (50-58, 4 years; 368-279 overall, 23 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-7. Colonial: 13-3/T1st.

Starters lost (2): David Grabuloff, F (8.4 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 1.1 spg, 30.0 mpg); Terence Jennings, G (14.0 ppg, 49.6 FG%, 37.9 3-pt%, 33.8 mpg).

Others lost: Bill Phillips, F (8.0 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 50.6 FG%, 21.8 mpg; transfer/St. Joseph's); Sam Steen, G (73.5 FT%, 11.8 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Randy Bracy, G, 6-1/Sr. (17.2 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 37.8 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 2.2 spg, 34.8 mpg); Jermaine Harmon, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 1.0 spg, 1.1 bpg, 25.9 mpg); Jimmy Moran, F/G, 6-7/Soph. (8.2 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 46.0 FG%, 38.0 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 27.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Brian Brown, G, 6-5/Jr.; James Haunty, F, 6-5/Jr.; Jarad Houston, G, 7-1/Soph.; Alex Klein, G, 6-4/Soph.; Scotty Scott, G, 5-10/Soph.; Mit Winter, G, 6-6/Soph. (47.1 FG%, 75.9 FT%, 50.0 3-pt%, 14.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Cody Carbaugh, G, 6-3/Fr.; Bill Davis, F, 6-9/Fr.; Justin Jackette, G, 6-2/Fr.; Tom Strohbehn, F, 6-9/Fr.

Strengths: Randy Bracy is the league's top returning scorer, and he gets his points from behind the 3-point arc, in transition or off penetration. Jim Moran played with a lot of composure as a freshman last season, giving the Tribe stability in several areas from the wing. There's nothing fancy about the inside game of Jermaine Harmon, but he's one of the CAA's most rugged big men.

Weaknesses: Three of the top four scorers are gone from last season's squad, the first W&M team to win 20 games since 1983. We'll see if the Tribe's power game can recover from the loss of David Grabuloff (graduation) and Bill Phillips (transfer to St. Joseph's).

Outlook: Bracy and Moran are a nice tandem to rebuild around, and that's what coach Charlie Woollum will be doing. The Tribe could make a push if 7-1 Jarad Houston develops into a low-post weapon and wing man Mit Winter makes the move from valuable reserve player to double-figure scorer. There's some experience on this team—Bracy, Harmon and Moran—but more unproven youth.

Last league title: 1998 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Williamsburg, Va. **Home court:** William & Mary Hall (10,000).

8. EAST CAROLINA

Coach: Joe Dooley (44-38, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 10-17. Colonial: 5-11/T7th.

Starters lost (4): Raphael Edwards, F (16.7 ppg, 8.2 rpg, 70.5 FT%, 31.3 mpg); Othello Meadows, G (11.7 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 80.0 FT%, 41.9 3-pt%, 31.0 mpg); Tony Parham, G (11.0 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 84.3 FT%, 1.0 spg, 29.9 mpg); Dink Peters, C (9.9 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 24.2 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (1): Alico Dunk, G, 6-0/Sr. (4.8 ppg, 1.1 spg, 25.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Garrett Blackwelder, G, 6-2/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 80.4 FT%, 41.6 3-pt%, 22.9 mpg); Steven Branch, F, 6-7/Soph. (3.0 rpg, 13.1 mpg); Quincy Hall, C, 7-0/Jr.

(RS/knee); Neil Punt, F, 6-7/Jr. (11.5 mpg); Winston Sharpe, F, 6-5/Soph. (9.1 mpg); Alphons van Ierland, C, 7-0/Soph. (12.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Kenyatta Brown, G, 6-4/Fr.; Brandon Hawkins, G, 6-2/Fr.; Evaldas Jocy, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); David Taylor, G, 6-4/Soph. (transfer/Georgia).

Strengths: Point guard Alico Dunk began his college career at Tennessee and is a steady ballhandler. Forward Steven Branch is a terrific athlete who just needs to pick up a pet move to become one of the Colonial's best mid-range scorers. ECU may have the CAA's best newcomer in Lithuanian Evaldas Jocy, a versatile big man who comes with a lot of JC press clippings.

Weaknesses: The Pirates lost their top four scorers and rebounders from a 10-17 team that should have been much better. Raphael Edwards, perhaps the league's top interior warrior for the past two seasons, is gone. ECU was the Colonial's worst defensive team last season, and it will try to shape up with Dunk as its only proven veteran. None of the returnees averaged more than 7.6 points.

Outlook: Coach Joe Dooley always seems to attract high-caliber CAA talent, though it hasn't translated into success on the court. The Pirates need some young players to step forward and lift a program that's in need of a hard push. This team could surprise everyone if Alphons van Ierland can elevate his production inside and Jocy has the impact that's expected.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1983.

Site: Greenville, N.C. **Home court:** Minges Coliseum (7,500).

9. VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH

Coach: Mack McCarthy (first year; 243-122 overall, 12 years; 2-5 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 9-19. Colonial: 4-12/9th.

Starters lost (2): Torrance Archie, F (10.0 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 53.6 FG%, 1.0 spg, 29.0 mpg); Mylo Brooks, C (10.5 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 76.1 FT%, 1.4 bpg, 20.9 mpg).

Others lost: Melvin Drake, F/G (8.0 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 52.8 FG%, 3.4 apg, 1.4 spg, 23.1 mpg); Randy Mills, F (8.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 74.1 FT%, 41.0 3-pt%, 23.3 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Patrick Kodjoe, F, 6-7/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 24.7 mpg); Scott Lilly, G, 6-2/Soph. (8.2 ppg, 32.1 mpg); LaMar Taylor, G, 5-10/Soph. (8.6 ppg, 4.5 apg, 1.6 spg, 30.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Hunter Hoggatt, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 15.8 mpg); Simon Moore, F, 6-7/Jr. (4.4 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 13.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Shawn Hampton, F, 6-8/Fr.; Leroy "Bo" Jones, G, 5-11/Soph. (JC); Fedor Likholitov, C, 6-10/Soph. (Russian club team); Shannon Martin, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Scott Moore, G, 6-5/Fr.; Reggie Okosa, F, 6-10/Fr.; Garland Ragler, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Matt Treadwell, C, 6-11/Fr.

Strengths: Mack McCarthy, formerly of UT-Chattanooga, spent last season as associate head coach with Sonny Smith. But Smith retired and left behind a couple of promising young guards in LaMar Taylor and Scott Lilly, who eventually will make up the CAA's best backcourt. Each averaged more than 30 minutes last season as freshmen. When motivated, forward Simon Moore can do serious damage inside. The Rams finally will play on a home court—the Siegel Center—after entertaining opponents for years at the Richmond Coliseum.

Weaknesses: The frontcourt is a mystery, though Moore has exhibited potential. Four of the top five scorers from last season's team are gone. McCarthy has a new, state-of-the-art facility in which to play, but he doesn't have much proven talent. He needs two or three from a group of seven newcomers to immediately help Taylor and Lilly.

Outlook: The Rams were playing—and beating—teams such as Louisville in the Metro Conference a few years ago. They're starting over with McCarthy, who got it done at UT-Chattanooga. The new facility might give VCU a home-court crowd that will result in a couple of victories. But it probably will be a few years before the Siegel Center gets its first championship banner.

Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.

Site: Richmond, Va. **Home court:** Siegel Center (7,500).

TSN

EAST DIVISION

1. IDAHO

Coach: David Farrar (15-12, 1 year; 76-85 overall, 6 years).
1997-98 record: 15-12. Big West Eastern: 9-7/3rd.
Starters lost (1): Kris Baumann, G (8.6 ppg, 80.0 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 28.6 mpg).

Others lost: Deon Cash, G/F; Eddie Hampton, F (3.0 rpg, 13.4 mpg); Kirk Hensing, F; Troy Thompson, F (5.8 ppg, 46.4 FG%, 83.7 FT%, 15.4 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Cameron Banks, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (11.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 48.5 FG%, 74.7 FT%, 25.1 mpg); Avery Curry, G, 6-0/Sr. (19.7 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 71.6 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 34.2 mpg); Clifford Gray, F, 6-5/Sr. (11.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 53.5 FG%, 27.6 mpg); Mao Tosi, F, 6-6/Sr. (4.1 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 51.3 FG%, 23.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Kevin Byrne, C, 6-9/Sr. (4.2 ppg, 54.4 FG%, 13.8 mpg); Jon Harris, G/F, 6-5/Soph.; Adam Miller, G, 5-10/Soph.; Josh Toal, G, 6-2/Sr. (4.6 ppg, 77.3 FT%, 1.1 spg, 17.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Kaniel Dickens, F, 6-8/Soph. (JC); Devon Ford, G/F, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Michael Jackson, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Anthony Lewis, G, 6-4/Fr.; Gordon Scott, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Tyrone Still, F, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Nathaniel Watson, G, 6-4/Fr.

Strengths: After three coaches in three seasons, David Farrar returns with a five-year contract. But there is a lot more to the Vandals than coaching continuity. Two transfers from Barton County (Kan.) CC, Gordon Scott and Michael Jackson, followed Barton coach Steve Forbes to Idaho, where he will be an assistant. Scott will be one of the best players in the league. His scoring abilities were so strong that Kansas was recruiting him. Jackson gives the Vandals a better inside game. Those two join Avery Curry, the conference's third-leading scorer last season.

Weaknesses: There was no consistency inside last season, and unless Jackson makes an immediate impact, there could be little this season. Scott and Jackson will also go through an adjustment period.

Outlook: Moscow, Idaho, is a dreary place and the Kibbie Dome—a combination football, track, basketball, tennis and anything else stadium—is difficult to play in. If the Vandals can do well on the road, where they were 3-9 last season, they could win the division.

Last league title: 1990 (Big Sky).

Last NCAA appearance: 1990.

Site: Moscow, Idaho. **Home court:** Kibbie Dome (10,000).

2. NEW MEXICO STATE

Coach: Lou Henson (191-83, 10 years; 681-343 overall, 35 years; 19-19 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 18-12. Big West Eastern: 8-8/5th.

Starters lost (3): Dominic Ellison, G (12.0 ppg, 74.0 FT%, 35.2 3-pt%, 5.5 apg, 1.1 spg, 33.3 mpg); Denmark Reid, G (16.9 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 78.6 FT%, 43.3 3-pt%, 33.8 mpg); Louis Richardson, F (17.9 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 71.9 FT%, 1.1 spg, 29.6 mpg).

Others lost: Bostjan Leban, G/F (1.0 spg, 22.0 mpg); Fern Tonella, G (transfer).

Starters returning (2): Aaron Brodt, C, 6-9/Jr. (5.1 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 50.4 FG%, 21.2 mpg); Charles Gosa, F, 6-8/Sr. (12.5 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 54.8 FG%, 1.2 spg, 1.1 bpg, 30.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Rhonte Davis, F, 6-7/Jr. (18.0 mpg); Mikko Neopila, F, 6-7/Soph. (13.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brad Bestor, G, 6-2/Jr. (transfer/NE Illinois); Simon Brendenberger, C, 6-10/Fr.; Eric Channing, F, 6-4/Fr.; Daveeno Hines, F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/NE Illinois); Ben Karam, G, 5-10/Fr.; William Keys, G, 6-2/Jr. (transfer/NE Illinois); Gerard Moore, F, 6-6/Jr. (transfer/NE Illinois); Zachary Norvell, G, 6-3/Soph. (transfer/NE Illinois); Damond Williams, G, 6-4/Fr.

Strengths: Northeastern Illinois' loss' is New Mexico State's gain. Amid that turmoil, Henson guided the Aggies to a 18-12 record, but they didn't qualify for the conference tournament. This season, the Aggies should regain their elite status in the Big West.

Weaknesses: So many new faces from Northeastern Illinois, a program that didn't play quality competition, isn't the best way to re-stock a program. But a lot is riding on the transfers.

Outlook: Last October, Henson replaced Neil McCarthy, who was fired. Amid that turmoil, Henson guided the Aggies to an 18-12 record, but they didn't qualify for the conference tournament. This season, the Aggies should regain their elite status in the Big West.

Last league title: 1997 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Las Cruces, N.M. **Home court:** Pan American Center (13,071).

3. BOISE STATE

Coach: Rod Jensen (46-39, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 17-13. Big West Eastern: 9-7/3rd.

Starters lost (2): Mike Tolman, F (14.6 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 49.2 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 44.3 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 31.5 mpg); Kenny Van Kirk, C (4.1 ppg, 50.0 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 19.3 mpg).

Others lost: Shane Flanagan, G (5.1 ppg, 1.1 spg, 15.4 mpg); transfer/Lewis-Clark State; Clinton Fox, F (transfer/Lewis-Clark State); Scotty Graham, G (left school); Mike Hagman, F (5.2 ppg, 40.9 3-pt%, 18.8 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Roberto Bergersen, G, 6-6/Sr. (19.4 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 51.4 FG%, 77.9 FT%, 41.7 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 31.7 mpg); Gerry Washington, G, 6-1/Sr. (11.4 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 77.7 FT%, 3.3 apg, 1.7 spg, 31.7 mpg); Kejuan Woods, F, 6-6/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 1.5 spg, 21.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Justin Lyons, F, 6-7/Sr. (4.6 ppg, 17.0 mpg; RS/knee); Steve Shephard, G, 6-3/Sr. (14.8 mpg); Trevor Tillman, C, 6-11/Soph. (1.3 bpg, 12.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Delvin Armstrong, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (RS/JC); Michael Gely, C, 7-0/Fr.; Clint Hordemann, G, 6-3/Soph. (RS/JC); Abe Jackson, F, 6-7/Fr.; Richard Morgan, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS); Jamal O'Quinn, F, 6-6/Fr.; Dustin Van Weerdhuizen, G, 6-5/Fr.; C.J. Williams, G, 6-0/Fr.

Strengths: The Broncos have a quality backcourt in Roberto Bergersen and Gerry Washington. Big things are expected from Richard Morgan and Michael Gely. Kejuan Woods should be improved.

Weaknesses: The Broncos were last in the Big West in rebounding in each of the past two seasons, and they hope the newcomers help. The Broncos weren't blessed with great quickness and have done little to improve.

Outlook: A solid group of players, led by Bergersen, make the Broncos a handful. But they must improve on the road (1-7 in Big West road games last season).

Last league title: 1994 (Big Sky).

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Boise, Idaho. **Home court:** BSU Pavilion (12,380).

4. UTAH STATE

Coach: Stew Morrill (first year; 218-138 overall, 12 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 25-8. Big West Eastern: 13-3/1st. Lost to Maryland in NCAA West first round.

Starters lost (3): Justin Jones, G (10.5 ppg, 46.7 FG%, 84.6 FT%, 49.6 3-pt%, 35.8 mpg); Kevin Rice, F (15.3 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 53.1 FG%, 73.4 FT%, 37.9 3-pt%, 1.7 spg, 33.7 mpg); Marcus Saxon, G (17.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 47.1 FG%, 78.7 FT%, 46.0 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 1.3 spg, 35.5 mpg).

Others lost: Neal Geddes, G (4.0 ppg, 77.3 FT%, 17.7 mpg); Dave Isaacson, F (19.0 mpg); Michael Jones, G/F (transfer).

Starters returning (2): Pharoah Davis, F, 6-5/Sr. (8.8 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 47.3 FG%, 28.9 mpg); Donnie Johnson, C, 6-6/Sr. (9.5 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 54.6 FG%, 26.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Tyrone Allick, G, 6-1/Sr.; Brandon Birch, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 47.9 FG%, 72.3 FT%, 13.1 mpg); Rick Randall, G, 6-3/Sr.; Mark Thurston, G, 6-5/Soph.

Top newcomers: Tony Brown, G, 6-4/Fr.; Melvin Farmer, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Dmitri Jorsen, C, 7-0/Soph. (JC); Spencer Nelson, G/F, 6-8/Fr.; Brad Wildden, F, 6-5/Soph. (JC).

Strengths: The top three scorers are gone, but Donnie Johnson, Brandon Birch and Pharoah Davis give the Aggies a strong presence inside. Newcomers Tony Brown and Spencer Nelson will get plenty of time.

Weaknesses: A lot of questions, with a freshman backcourt—should Brown and Nelson start—topping the list. Plus, new coach Stew Morrill will have little time to mold the team into his own image.

Outlook: Who knew the breakup of the Bulls would affect the Aggies? When Tim Floyd left Iowa State to join the Bulls' organization, coach Larry Eustachy was snapped up by Iowa State. He probably was the biggest of USU's offseason losses. It will be a long winter for Morrill.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Logan, Utah. **Home court:** D.G. Smith Spectrum (10,270).

5. NORTH TEXAS

Coach: Vic Trilli (5-21, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 5-21. Big West Eastern: 4-12/6th.

Starters lost (3): T.J. Atkins, G (4.8 ppg, 18.3 mpg); David Miller, F (12.3 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 71.3 FT%, 1.8 spg, 27.0 mpg); Travis Schofield, G (11.2 ppg, 86.7 FT%, 2.0 spg, 22.4 mpg).

Others lost: Pooh Davis, G (6.3 ppg, 1.4 spg, 19.2 mpg; transfer); Ed Harvey, G (7.9 ppg, 16.0 mpg; transfer); Robert Washington, G (7.0 ppg, 82.1 FT%, 15.8 mpg; transfer/UT-

By **CHRIS FOSTER**
Los Angeles Times

PREDICTIONS

EAST DIVISION

1. Idaho
2. New Mexico State
3. Boise State
4. Utah State
5. North Texas
6. Nevada

WEST DIVISION

1. Long Beach St.
2. Cal Poly
3. CS Fullerton
4. Pacific
5. UC Irvine
6. UC Santa Barbara

ALL-BIG WEST

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	CHARLES GOSA, New Mexico State	6-8/195	Sr.
F	IKE HARMON, Cal State Fullerton	6-7/190	Jr.
F/G	GORDON SCOTT, Idaho	6-5/195	Jr.
G	ROBERTO BERGERSEN, Boise State	6-6/200	Sr.
G	MIKE WOZNIAK, Cal-Poly SLO	6-2/175	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
C	CHRIS BJORKLAND, Cal-Poly SLO	6-9/230	Soph.
F	DAVEENO HINES, New Mexico State	6-6/215	Soph.
F/G	ANTRONE LEE, Long Beach State	6-7/200	Jr.
G	AVERY CURRY, Idaho	6-0/179	Sr.
G	RAMEL LLOYD, Long Beach State	6-4/235	Soph.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

GORDON SCOTT, F/G, Idaho



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

GORDON SCOTT, F/G, Idaho

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Mike Wozniak, Cal Poly.

Best rebounder: Charles Gosa, New Mexico State.

Best playmaker: Ben Larson, Cal Poly.

Best defender: Avery Curry, Idaho.

Best leaper: Jared Frey, Long Beach State.

Most versatile: Roberto Bergersen, Boise State.

Most flamboyant: RameL Lloyd, Long Beach State.

Best NBA prospect: Ike Harmon, Cal State Fullerton.



Arlington).

Starters returning (2): Chuck Thrash, F, 6-6/Sr. (8.7 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 1.7 spg, 1.4 bpg, 26.5 mpg); Charles Washington, F, 6-4/Sr. (10.5 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 7.4 FT%, 40.7 3-pt%, 2.2 spg, 29.1 mpg).

Other returnees: None.

Top newcomers: Wes Allen G, 6-3/Fr.; Graeme Anstey, C, 6-11/Soph. (transfer/San Jose State); Jamal Brown, G, 6-0/Fr.; Michael Colter, G, 6-0/Jr. (transfer/San Francisco); Chris Davis, F, 6-6/Fr.; Deginald Erskin, F, 6-6/Fr.; Sam Funches, F, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/Connecticut; eligible second semester); Dominic Hardie, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Kenneth Mangrum, G, 6-4/Fr.; Faheem Nelson, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Dexter Tennell, G, 6-6/Fr.; Calvin Williams, G, 6-0/Soph. (JC).

Strengths: A big turnover, but the quality should be improved. Second-year coach Vic Trilli has 12 new faces. The Eagles have more size, so they shouldn't have to rely solely on 3-pointers as they did for much of last season.

Weaknesses: There is no proven inside threat, just some guys who are a little closer to the basket. No one has claimed the point guard role yet, and last season Trilli's up-tempo style hurt the Eagles more than it helped.

Outlook: There still is a long way to go, but the Eagles may be moving in the right direction. If the big guys play well, they will be tough.

Last league title: 1988 (SLC). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1988.

Site: Denton, Texas. **Home court:** The Super Pit (10,032).

6. NEVADA

Coach: Pat Foster (82-63, 5 years; 358-185 overall, 18 years; 2-5 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 16-12. Big West Eastern: 11-5/2nd.

Starters lost (5): Jimmy Carroll, G (12.7 ppg, 85.0 FT%, 40.4 3-pt%, 30.8 mpg); Paul Culbertson, G/F (18.1 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 47.0 FG%, 72.3 FT%, 2.5 spg, 30.7 mpg); Robin Kennedy, G (11.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 79.7 FT%, 35.6 3-pt%, 6.4 apg, 1.5 spg, 31.1 mpg); David Morgan, C (8.5 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 27.3 mpg); Marvin Wilson, C (9.3 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 64.7 FG%, 20.6 mpg).

Others lost: Lamont Allen, G (4.6 ppg, 49.4 FG%, 81.6 FT%, 13.6 mpg); Kris Hackbusch, F; Jerome Murray, G (4.6 ppg, 81.4 FT%, 15.9 mpg); Steve Pienkoski, C (4.9 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 54.7 FG%, 70.8 FT%, 18.0 mpg).

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: Lamont Bonner, F, 6-6/Soph.; Andre McLeod, F, 6-7/Sr. (RS/illness); Tommy Zapata, G, 6-3/Jr.

Top newcomers: Derrick Anderson, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Chris Bacon, G/F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); John Burrell, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Damon Caldwell, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Calvin Criddle, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Dan Galvanoni, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Joao Santos, F, 6-9/Fr.

Strengths: Everything depends on the JC transfers. Andre McLeod, Calvin Criddle and Chris Bacon should help inside. Derrick Anderson and John Burrell should become solid back-court players. Dan Galvanoni could have an impact at the point.

Weaknesses: Just getting acquainted will take time. It is impossible to lose nine players and continue winning. There are no apparent go-to guys, and there is little size.

Outlook: Expectations always run high in Reno. If Nevada fans are longing for basketball, they should find it in the conference tournament, which is in Reno. But the Wolf Pack isn't likely to be playing in the tournament.

Last league title: 1985 (Big Sky).

Last NCAA appearance: 1985.

Site: Reno, Nev. **Home court:** Lawlor Events Center (11,200).

WEST DIVISION

1. LONG BEACH STATE

Coach: Wayne Morgan (23-33, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 10-19. Big West Western: 5-11/5th.

Starters lost (2): Andrew Betts, C (18.7 ppg, 10.1 rpg, 54.0 FG%, 1.7 bpg, 34.8 mpg); Quincy Nuckles, G (10.5 ppg, 35.8 3-pt%, 25.3 mpg).

Others lost: Jermel Bradley, G (18.4 mpg; transfer/CS Dominguez Hills); David Egans, G (7.8 ppg, 25.8 mpg; transfer).

Starters returning (3): D'Cean Bryant, F, 6-6/Sr. (12.7 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 36.3 mpg); Antrone Lee, G/F, 6-7/Jr. (11.7 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 3.0 apg, 2.2 spg, 1.8 bpg, 35.9 mpg); Grant Stone, F, 6-8/Soph. (5.2 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 26.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Jared Frey, F, 6-6/Sr. (12.9 mpg); Ian Milley, C, 6-10/Soph.

Top newcomers: James Delone, G, 6-2/Fr.; Allan Gomez, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Ramel Lloyd, G, 6-4/Soph. (transfer/Syracuse); Mate Milisa, C, 6-11/Jr. (JC); Charles O'Neal, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Ugonna Onykwue, F, 6-8/Fr.; Richie Smalls, F, 6-8/Jr.

Strengths: No team in the league can match the 49ers in overall talent. Ramel Lloyd and Charles O'Neal are the keys. Antrone Lee is a threat inside and outside. D'Cean Bryant is a 3-point threat. Mate Milisa, Ugonna Onykwue and Grant Stone make the 49ers formidable up front.

Weaknesses: Something was missing last season. The 49ers seemed unprepared at times, and they didn't make

key adjustments at times. That points to coach Wayne Morgan.

Outlook: Long Beach should win the division and has the talent to win the conference. The 49ers are by no means a lock for either, but they better accomplish at least one.

Morgan is under pressure to win this year.

Last league title: 1995. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1995.

Site: Long Beach, Calif. **Home court:** The Pyramid (5,000).

2. CAL POLY

Coach: Jeff Schneider (44-43, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 14-14. Big West Western: 7-9/2nd.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Rick Kinner, G; Joe Madrid, C; Josh Porter, G (4.2 ppg, 45.7 FG%, 12.5 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Chris Bjorklund, C, 6-9/Soph. (17.3 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 52.6 FG%, 31.1 mpg); Ross Ketcham, F, 6-8/Sr. (8.5 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 73.9 FT%, 36.9 3-pt%, 27.1 mpg); Ben Larson, G, 6-0/Sr. (7.2 ppg, 72.6 FT%, 4.8 apg, 2.1 spg, 31.5 mpg); Jabbar Washington, F, 6-3/Soph. (8.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 47.2 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 19.0 mpg); Mike Wozniak, G, 6-2/Jr. (20.3 ppg, 89.0 FT%, 41.7 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 32.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Brandon Beeson, F, 6-7/Soph. (3.1 rpg, 10.3 mpg); Watende Favors, G, 6-2/Soph. (10.0 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 1.0 spg, 21.5 mpg); Steve Fleming, F, 6-5/Sr. (9.3 mpg); Jeremiah Mayes, F, 6-8/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 58.1 FG%, 12.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: James Grace, F, 6-5/Fr.; David Henry, F, 6-7/Fr.; Jason King, G, 5-9/Fr.

Strengths: All five starters are back. Mike Wozniak is talented and feisty, which plays well in the Mustangs' press-and-stress style (they were ninth in the nation in offense at 84.5 ppg).

Coach Jeff Schneider has brought in more speed to fit his style.

Weaknesses: Rebounding is a problem. The Mustangs' up-tempo style causes as many turnovers as it creates. Some defense would help, too: Foes averaged 85.6 ppg.

Outlook: The Mustangs have created a good fan base. Still, so far, their play has been much ado about nothing. This season, there could be more to shout about.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: San Luis Obispo, Calif. **Home court:** Mott Gym (3,200).

3. CAL STATE FULLERTON

Coach: Bob Hawking (38-70, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 12-16. Big West Western: 6-10/T3rd.

Starters lost (3): Chris Dade, G (17.0 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 74.5 FT%, 36.5 3-pt%, 2.1 spg, 31.2 mpg); Chris St. Clair, G (9.8 ppg, 7.6 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 1.2 spg, 29.2 mpg); Craig Whitehead, F (6.5 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 19.7 mpg).

Others lost: Dane Plock, G, 6-1/Jr. (10.2 mpg; quit team); Corey Sanders, C (11.0 mpg; transfer/New Orleans); Wyki Tyson, C; DeVaughn Wright, F (9.8 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Ike Harmon, F, 6-7/Jr. (15.3 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 1.0 spg, 24.3 mpg); Mark Richardson, F, 6-7/Sr. (5.4 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 21.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Matt Caldwell, C, 6-8/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 45.4 FG%, 13.2 mpg); Jason Cunningham, F, 6-5/Sr. (5.0 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 21.4 mpg); Kenroy Jarrett, G, 5-11/Jr. (4.8 ppg, 81.8 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 15.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brandon Campbell, G/F, 6-4/Fr.; Mitch Deve, C, 7-2/Fr.; Matt Donahue, G, 6-1/Fr.; Josh Fischer, F, 6-9/Fr.; Josh Helbig, G/F, 6-6/Fr.; Mark Murphy, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Ike Harmon is developing into one of the conference's best players, but what about a supporting cast? The backcourt looks good. Mark Murphy is a good shooter.

Weaknesses: The Titans lost two solid players in Chris Dade and Chris St. Clair. Matt Caldwell had three exceptional games last season (all wins), but he vanished too often. When Mark Richardson played well inside, it took the pressure off the perimeter players.

Outlook: In this division, no one is an also-ran, so there is hope for the Titans, provided everything falls into place. The Titans will be good on nights Harmon is great.

Last league title: 1978. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1978.

Site: Fullerton, Calif. **Home court:** Titan Gym (3,500).

4. PACIFIC

Coach: Bob Thomason (160-131, 10 years; 287-207 overall, 17 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 23-10. Big West Western: 14-2/1st. Lost to Fresno State in NIT first round.

Starters lost (5): Corey Anders, G (10.5 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 1.9 spg, 31.6 mpg); Adam Jacobsen, G (11.6 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 82.6 FT%, 40.2 3-pt%, 4.7 apg, 1.1 spg, 34.4 mpg); Rayne Mahaffey, F (7.2 ppg, 46.8 FG%, 74.3 FT%, 38.5 3-pt%, 19.5 mpg); Michael Olowokandi, C (22.2 ppg, 11.2 rpg, 60.8 FG%, 2.9 bpg, 31.7 mpg); Aaron Woliczko, F (6.5 ppg, 37.3 3-pt%, 24.4 mpg).

Others lost: Nick Foster, C.

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: Earl Clark, G, 6-1/Jr. (15.8 mpg); Barry Marvel, F, 6-7/Jr. (3.0 rpg, 16.6 mpg); Clay McKnight, G,

6-1/Jr. (13.6 mpg); Scott Thomason, G, 5-8/Sr. (10.7 mpg); Bill Walton, F, 6-6/Soph.; Jason Williams, F, 6-7/Sr. (8.7 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 54.2 FG%, 22.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Andy Abernethy, F, 6-7/Fr.; Matt Abernethy, F, 6-7/Fr.; Nathan Davis, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Mike Hahn, F, 6-7/Fr.; Tim Johnson, C, 6-10/Fr.; Eli Kiedrowski, F, 6-6/Fr. (RS); Dan Masters, F, 6-7/Fr.; Ross Mills, C, 6-10/Fr. (RS); Mike Preston, C, 6-9/Fr.

Strengths: A load of new talent must have an impact; seven are at least 6-7. Jason Williams returns at power forward, and there is some experience in the backcourt.

Weaknesses: Williams is the only returnee who averaged more than three points last season. The biggest hole is the loss of center Michael Olowokandi. Three freshmen—Ross Mills, Tim Johnson and Mike Preston—will try to replace him.

Outlook: After two years of dominating their division, the Tigers will slip in the standings. Whether it becomes a free fall depends on the development of the younger players.

Last league title: 1998. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997.

Site: Stockton, Calif. **Home court:** Spanos Center (6,150).

5. UC IRVINE

Coach: Pat Douglass (9-18, 1 year; 385-136 overall, 17 years).

1997-98 record: 9-18. Big West Western: 6-10/T3rd.

Starters lost (2): Junior Bond, G (5.5 ppg, 88.2 FT%, 3.5 apg, 1.0 spg, 28.0 mpg; transfer); Andrew Carlson, C (4.8 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 17.4 mpg; transfer).

Others lost: Juma Jackson, F (4.4 ppg, 1.0 spg, 19.0 mpg; transfer); Lamar Parker, G (8.5 ppg, 1.1 spg, 21.0 mpg; quit team); Wendell Robinson, C (5.2 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 45.2 FG%, 16.7 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Jason Flowers, G, 6-1/Soph. (8.2 ppg, 84.0 FT%, 37.1 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 21.1 mpg); Ben Jones, F, 6-7/Soph. (8.6 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 82.1 FT%, 38.5 3-pt%, 24.9 mpg); Adam Stetson, F, 6-7/Jr. (12.1 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 75.9 FT%, 37.1 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 29.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Malachi Edmond, G, 6-0/Soph. (14.0 mpg); Brian Scoggin, G, 6-2/Sr. (15.2 mpg); Matt Willard, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (5.7 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 49.5 3-pt%, 16.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Zamiro Bennen, G, 6-3/Fr.; Gabe Cagwin, G, 5-8/Fr.; Stan Divranos, F, 6-8/Soph. (JC); Mark Gottschalk, C, 6-10/Fr.; Jerry Green, G, 6-3/Fr.; Marek Ondera, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Coach Pat Douglass got a lot out of a little last season; now he has some talent. Jerry Green has a good chance to be the Big West freshman of the year. Mark Gottschalk and Stan Divranos will provide an inside presence.

Weaknesses: Look for loads of freshmen mistakes. A point guard needs to emerge. The new players also must adjust to Douglass' style, and the returnees must adjust to sharing time.

Outlook: Things are getting better, fast. The Anteaters won nine games last season, eight more than the previous year. It was Douglass' first losing season as a coach. The Anteaters are probably at least a year away from serious contention.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Irvine, Calif. **Home court:** Bren Events Center (5,000).

6. UC SANTA BARBARA

Coach: Bob Williams (first year; 189-100 overall, 10 years).

1997-98 record: 7-19. Big West Western: 4-12/6th.

Starters lost (3): Raymond Tutt, G (18.9 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 50.6 FG%, 76.7 FT%, 1.6 spg, 35.1 mpg); Kealon Wallace, F (7.9 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 49.7 FG%, 26.6 mpg); Dwayne Williams, F (7.4 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 76.2 FT%, 24.0 mpg).

Others lost: Les Bean, G (14.8 mpg); Matt Pinkney, F; Matt Stock, G.

Starters returning (2): B.J. Bunton, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.8 ppg, 54.5 FG%, 28.7 mpg); Brandon Payton, G, 6-0/Soph. (7.9 ppg, 76.0 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 21.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Chris Lynch, F, 6-5/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 47.3 FG%); Josh Merrill, F, 6-9/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 73.8 FT%, 17.8 mpg); Mike Vukovich, F, 6-9/Soph.; Tory Woodward, G, 6-1/Soph. (13.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Derrick Allen, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Erik Ashe, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Larry Bell, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Matt Blakely, F, 6-5/Soph. (transfer/New Hampshire); Eric Hare, F, 6-5/Fr.; Mark Hull, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: The Gauchos are in a rebuilding mode, as UC Davis coach Bob Williams replaces Jerry Pimm. Pimm leaves behind two solid players in B.J. Bunton and Brandon Payton, brother of NBA All-Star Gary Payton.

Weaknesses: Other than Bunton, the Gauchos may get pushed around. Payton can be brilliant, but he had almost as many turnovers (58) as assists (59) last season.

Outlook: The mood should be better than last season, when the players staged a short-lived revolt in December. They demanded coach Jerry Pimm's ouster—and eventually got it. Williams, like Irvine's Pat Douglass (at Cal State Bakersfield), won a Division II title and was rewarded with a lower-level Division I job. UCSB used to be one of the conference's top teams. It will take Williams time to get his team back to that level.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1990.

Site: Santa Barbara, Calif. **Home court:** Thunderdome (6,000).

AMERICA EAST



1. DELAWARE

Coach: Mike Brey (50-38, 3 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 20-10. America East: 12-6/T1st. Lost to Purdue in NCAA Midwest first round.
Starters lost (1): Keith Davis, G (10.6 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 41.0 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.4 spg, 36.4 mpg).
Others lost: None.
Starters returning (4): Greg Miller, G, 6-4/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 38.7 3-pt%, 23.2 mpg); Mike Pegues, F, 6-5/Jr. (16.8 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 51.1 FG%, 73.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 34.2 mpg); Tyrone Perry, G, 5-11/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 78.6 FT%, 3.0 apg, 1.8 spg); Darryl Presley, F, 6-6/Jr. (12.9 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 54.1 FG%, 78.5 FT%, 30.1 mpg).
Other returnees: John Bennett, C, 6-10/Sr. (4.0 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 55.4 FG%, 1.3 bpg, 16.7 mpg); Madou Diouf, G, 6-5/Soph.; Fred Gonzalez, F, 6-9/Sr.; Kestutis Marciulionis, G, 6-2/Jr. (9.7 ppg, 72.7 FT%, 1.0 spg, 21.5 mpg).
Top newcomers: John Gordon, G, 5-10/Jr. (transfer/Maine); Ndongo Ndiaye, C, 7-1/Jr. (transfer/Providence).
Strengths: Start with four returning regulars, including the tandem of all-league first-teamer Mike Pegues, a big producer at both ends, and Darryl Presley, who came on during the second half of last season. Tyrone Perry slides into the point guard spot vacated by Keith Davis, the lone starter lost, and should pad his assist total quite nicely by dishing to John Gordon, a primo long-range gunner. Kestutis Marciulionis is a deep threat, and Greg Miller flashed some shooting range as well.
Weaknesses: Delaware needs to get some rebounding help and improve its interior defense. Should John Bennett and Providence transfer Ndongo Ndiaye produce, the Hens will be just fine.
Outlook: Last year was great, but this season could be even better. With a strong, deep backcourt and the frontcourt pairing of Pegues and Presley, Delaware is primed for another title run. If Gordon and Ndiaye come through, you can bet the Blue Hens won't have another first-round tourney embarrassment.
Last league title: 1998 (tie).
Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.
Site: Newark, Del. **Home court:** Carpenter Center (5,000).

2. DREXEL

Coach: Bill Herrion (147-62, 7 years; 1-3 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 13-15. America East: 10-8/6th.
Starters lost: None.
Others lost: None.
Starters returning (5): Mike DeRocckis, G, 6-2/Sr. (15.4 ppg, 79.8 FT%, 37.6 3-pt%, 37.5 mpg); Greg Gaffney, G, 5-7/Sr. (4.1 ppg, 81.1 FT%, 52.5 3-pt%, 4.3 apg, 25.5 mpg); Joe Linderman, C, 6-9/Jr. (18.4 ppg, 8.5 rpg, 52.4 FG%, 35.1 mpg); Patrick Sanders, F, 6-6/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 23.3 mpg); Stephen Starks, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (6.8 ppg, 19.3 mpg).
Other returnees: Bryant Coursey, G, 6-1/Jr. (7.4 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 72.0 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 1.2 spg, 23.7 mpg); Tom Dearborn, G, 6-2/Jr.; Mike Kouser, F, 6-7/Sr. (5.4 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 18.0 mpg); Ross Neisler, G, 6-3/Sr. (11.5 mpg); Brahin Riley, F, 6-7/Sr. (1.4 ppg, 1.2 mpg); David Stec, G, 6-4/Soph.; Julius Williams, G, 6-4/Soph. (12.8 mpg).
Top newcomer: Chris Burch, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (JC).
Strengths: All five starters return determined to show that last season's fall from the America East peak was a fluke. Leading the way is the inside-outside tandem of Joe Linderman and Mike DeRocckis. Linderman was third in scoring last year and fifth in rebounding and could end up leading the league in both categories this season. The sharpshooting DeRocckis struggled a little last year, but he is an outstanding long-range weapon. Patrick Sanders experienced some growing pains last year during his debut, but he has a big upside. Greg Gaffney is short, but he's a capable assist man.
Weaknesses: The Dragons had too many promising players underachieving last season, and a change must occur if they want to challenge for the title. Drexel was outrebounded on average last year and shot just 41.7 percent from the field. The Dragons also were last in the league in steals. It's time for guys like Mike Kouser and Stephen Starks to step up. Julius Williams and Bryant Coursey, who missed 10 games because of a suspension

last year, need to provide quality depth.
Outlook: After averaging 22 wins for six seasons, the Dragons slipped last year. There's too much talent on this team for that to happen again. Linderman is a star, and DeRocckis can be one if he improves his shot selection. Sanders, Coursey, Starks and Williams have what it takes to form a talented supporting cast.
Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.
Site: Philadelphia. **Home court:** Physical Education Athletic Center (2,300).

3. BOSTON U.

Coach: Dennis Wolff (77-43, 4 years; 107-61 overall, 6 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 19-11. America East: 12-6/T1st.
Starters lost (1): Joey Beard, C (12.8 ppg, 9.0 rpg, 1.3 spg, 51.2 FG%, 28.6 mpg).
Others lost: Alexi Giannoulis, G; Geoff Evans, G.
Starters returning (4): Billy Beal, G, 6-2/Sr. (13.4 ppg, 78.9 FT%, 37.2 3-pt%, 30.3 mpg); Walter Brown, F, 6-6/Sr. (14.7 ppg, 52.8 FG%, 8.9 rpg, 1.1 apg, 1.1 bpg, 34.0 mpg); Mike Costello, G, 6-4/Jr. (7.8 ppg, 24.3 mpg); LeVar Folk, G, 5-10/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 5.4 apg, 1.9 spg, 33.7 mpg).
Other returnees: Jean Avebe, F, 6-7/Jr. (3.5 ppg, 13.7 mpg); Matt Curley, F, 6-6/Sr. (5.3 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 76.5 FT%, 20.7 mpg); Ken Michin, F/C, 6-10/Jr. (8.1 mpg).
Top newcomers: Marshall Crane, G, 6-4/Fr.; Derek Franklin, G, 6-0/Fr.; Jerome Graham, F, 6-7/Fr.; Ignacio Rodriguez, F, 6-8/Fr.
Strengths: Walter Brown is a powerful performer, capable of scoring on just about anybody who guards him, and he's able to dominate the boards. The backcourt is loaded with talent, including point man LeVar Folk, who finished second in the conference in assists, long-range bomber Billy Beal and Mike Costello, another marksman. Matt Curley is a capable wing scorer, provided his shot improves.
Weaknesses: Joey Beard's departure leaves a hole in the middle, and coach Dennis Wolff needs freshman Ignacio Rodriguez to step up immediately. He has the skills to do it. It would be nice if Curley, Ken Michin and another freshman, Jerome Graham, were able to help on the boards, too.
Outlook: The Terriers remain solid title contenders, thanks to their excellent backcourt and the superb production of Brown. But they need help up front, and unless Rodriguez, Michin and Graham emerge, Brown will be fighting battles in the paint by himself.
Last league title: 1998 (tie).
Last NCAA appearance: 1997.
Site: Boston. **Home court:** Case Gym (1,800).

4. HOFSTRA

Coach: Jay Wright (50-63, 4 years).
1997-98 record: 19-12. America East: 11-7/T3rd.
Starters lost: None.
Others lost: Lance Dunkley, F/C; Tom Marich, G.
Starters returning (5): Craig Claxton, G, 5-10/Jr. (16.3 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 48.5 FG%, 73.0 FT%, 7.2 apg, 2.2 spg, 34.9 mpg); Roberto Gittens, F, 6-6/Soph. (10.7 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 52.8 FG%, 2.0 bpg, 27.4 mpg); Duane Posey, C/F, 6-7/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 75.4 FT%, 26.4 mpg); Mike Renfro, G, 6-4/Sr. (7.1 ppg, 25.6 mpg); Norman Richardson, F, 6-5/Soph. (8.6 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 23.9 mpg).
Other returnees: Tim Beckett, F, 6-8/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 21.8 mpg); Joe Brown, F, 6-7/Jr. (7.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 1.1 spg, 20.6 mpg); Anthony Davis, G, 6-0/Sr. (7.7 ppg, 86.0 FT%, 19.2 mpg); Mike Feeley, G, 6-6/Soph.
Top newcomers: Jason Hernandez, G, 6-0/Jr. (transfer/New Hampshire); Marc Petit, F/C, 6-7/Soph. (Prop 48); Abdou Sylla, F, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/DePaul).
Strengths: No team in the league has more depth than the Flying Dutchmen, who return an eight-man rotation that will be fortified by transfers Jason Hernandez and Abdou Sylla. Last year, point man Craig "Speedy" Claxton joined Reggie Lewis as the only sophomore to be named league player of the year. He's a tremendous scorer and big-time distributor. Norman Richardson and sharpshooter Mike Renfro are capable off-guards, and Roberto Gittens, an excellent shot blocker, teams with Joe Brown in a solid swingman rotation. Duane Posey is a capable pivot man.
Weaknesses: The Flying Dutchmen don't shoot well from behind the arc (31.0 percent from 3-point range),

BY MICHAEL BRADLEY
 Free-lance writer based in Philadelphia

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Delaware | 6. Maine |
| 2. Drexel | 7. Hartford |
| 3. Boston U. | 8. Northeastern |
| 4. Hofstra | 9. New Hampshire |
| 5. Vermont | 10. Towson |

ALL-AMERICA EAST

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	WALTER BROWN, Boston U.	6-6/185	Sr.
C	JOE LINDERMAN, Drexel	6-9/220	Jr.
F	MIKE PEGUES, Delaware	6-5/245	Jr.
G	JUSTIN BAILEY, Hartford	6-2/171	Sr.
G	CRAIG CLAXTON, Hofstra	5-10/165	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	ROBERTO GITTENS, Hofstra	6-6/230	Soph.
C/F	ALLEN LEDBETTER, Maine	6-6/225	Sr.
F	DARRYL PRESSLEY, Delaware	6-6/200	Jr.
G	MIKE DEROCCKIS, Drexel	6-2/185	Sr.
G	TONY ORCIARI, Vermont	6-3/180	Soph.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CRAIG CLAXTON, G, Hofstra



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

WILL CHAVIS, G, New Hampshire

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter:** Andy Cavo, New Hampshire.
Best rebounder: Allen Ledbetter, Maine.
Best playmaker: Craig Claxton, Hofstra.
Best defender: Justin Bailey, Hartford.
Best leaper: Walter Brown, Boston U.
Most versatile: Justin Bailey, Hartford.
Most flamboyant: Craig Claxton, Hofstra.
Best NBA prospect: Craig Claxton, Hofstra.



and they turn over the ball too much. They're young and need to find another consistent producer to complement Claxton.

Outlook: Hofstra is young, but it has plenty of talent and is clearly set to challenge for the top spot. Claxton would do well in the Big East or Atlantic 10, and is practically unstoppable at this level. Gittens could become a star, too. Hernandez and Sylla should allow the Flying Dutchmen to apply more defensive pressure and run more, something Claxton will love. It might not be Hofstra's time yet, but there isn't much more sand remaining in the hourglass.

Last league title: 1992 (East Coast).

Last NCAA appearance: 1977.

Site: Hempstead, N.Y. **Home court:** Physical Fitness Ctr. (2,500).

5. VERMONT

Coach: Tom Brennan (136-195, 12 years; 182-253 overall, 16 years).

1997-98 record: 16-11. America East: 11-7/T3rd.

Starters lost (1): Erik Nelson, C (16.2 ppg, 9.1 rpg, 57.3 FG%, 2.8 bpg, 1.7 spg, 30.3 mpg).

Others lost: Shoe DeJong, F.

Starters returning (4): Tobe Carberry, G, 6-2/Jr. (11.1 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 27.4 mpg); Tony Orciari, G, 6-3/Soph. (14.7 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 45.1 FG%, 77.8 FT%, 30.3 mpg); Craig Peper, F, 6-8/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 45.1 FG%, 1.1 spg, 23.4 mpg); David Roach, G, 5-11/Jr. (4.7 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 4.0 apg, 30.6 mpg).

Other returnees: Jared Steele, F, 6-6/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 71.6 FT%, 17.4 mpg); Tyler Murphy, G, 6-5/Jr. (4.3 ppg, 75.7 FT%, 14.0 mpg); Matt Chotkowski, F, 6-6/Sr. (4.4 rpg, 18.8 mpg); Chad Rainey, G, 5-10/Jr.; Brian Nemitz, G, 6-4/Jr.

Top newcomers: Trevor Gaines, F, 6-6/Jr.; Cory McLaughlin, F, 6-8/Fr. (transfer/Fordham); Sam Meister, G, 6-5/Fr. **Strengths:** The Catamounts return four starters and three double-figure scorers. Tony Orciari was the league's rookie of the year last season and teams with Tobe Carberry and David Roach in a talented backcourt that should be fortified by the arrival of Sam Meister. Craig Peper can rebound and should receive some help from Cory McLaughlin, who becomes eligible in January.

Weaknesses: Vermont still won't have enough talent up front. Erik Nelson's graduation cripples the frontcourt rotation. The Cats need Jared Steele and Matt Chotkowski to provide rebounding and defense, and Peper must increase his scoring production. Vermont also must improve its 3-point shooting, which was a dismal 30.9 percent last season.

Outlook: Losing Nelson won't kill Vermont, but it will keep the Catamounts from launching a serious bid for the league title. Coach Tom Brennan has built a solid program, and the backcourt is good—and getting better. But none of the frontcourt performers inspire that much confidence, which will be a problem. Still, Vermont should finish above .500 and make life tough for more than a few foes.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Burlington, Vt. **Home court:** Patrick Gym (3,228).

6. MAINE

Coach: John Giannini (18-40, 2 years; 186-78 overall, 9 years).

1997-98 record: 7-20. America East: 4-14/T9th.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Raahsan Thompson, F (3.8 rpg, 21.7 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Dade Faison, G, 5-11/Jr. (4.4 ppg, 71.4 FT%, 5.1 apg, 1.6 spg); Colin Haynes, F, 6-7/Soph. (7.3 ppg, 7.2 rpg, 38.0 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 29.6 mpg); Allen Ledbetter, C/F, 6-6/Sr. (16.1 ppg, 10.9 rpg, 59.1 FG%, 1.6 spg, 35.6 mpg); Fred Meeks, G, 6-1/Sr. (19.5 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 70.2 FT%, 42.8 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 28.5 mpg); Marcus Willis, G, 6-1/Sr. (17.4 ppg, 72.8 FT%, 1.3 spg, 30.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Corey Thibodeau, G, 6-1/Jr. (4.2 ppg, 75.0 FT%, 19.8 mpg); Todd Tibbets, F, 6-6/Soph. (10.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Andy Bedard, G, 6-1/Jr. (transfer/Boston College); Jamar Croom, C, 6-9/Fr. (RS/knee); Clinton Dye, G, 6-2/Fr.; Nate Fox, F, 6-8/Jr. (transfer/Boston College); Rickey White, G/F, 6-4/Fr. **Strengths:** The Black Bears can strike from the inside or out, thanks to the inside play of Allen Ledbetter, the only A-East player to average a double-double for all of last season, and the productive guard tandem of Marcus Willis and big-time gunner Fred Meeks. Those three should help make Maine one of the league's most exciting offensive teams. Add solid point guard Dade Faison, forward Colin Haynes, a budding board eater, and a group of newcomers that includes Boston College transfers Andy Bedard and Nate Fox and redshirt freshman Jamar Croom, and Maine certainly will improve on last year's ninth-place finish.

Weaknesses: How high the Bears climb will depend on whether they play any defense—and if they can cut down

on turnovers and poor shot selection. Yes, Maine will score, but fans grow tired of watching 82-80 losses after awhile. The Bears also could use a rebounding upgrade.

Outlook: The Bears must mature from an exciting team that makes lots of mistakes into a championship club capable of sacrificing stats for wins. The backcourt is excellent, and Ledbetter is lethal down low. The recruiting class brings help up front, but coach John Giannini's challenge is to teach Maine how to win, not just thrive.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Orono, Maine. **Home court:** Alford Sports Arena (5,688).

7. HARTFORD

Coach: Paul Brazeau (79-87, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 15-12. America East: 11-7/T3rd.

Starters lost (3): Anthony Bethune, F (17.9 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 45.2 FG%, 73.9 FT%, 1.7 spg, 30.3 mpg); Keith Bike, G (11.4 ppg, 81.7 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 4.1 apg, 1.9 spg, 30.2 mpg); Ryan Howse, F (13.0 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 51.8 FG%, 71.0 FT%, 33.4 mpg).

Others lost: Sean Tabb, G (5.9 ppg, 21.8 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Justin Bailey, G, 6-2/Sr. (20.1 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 83.8 FT%, 36.0 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 2.2 spg, 34.1 mpg); Chris Eames, C, 6-7/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 59.1 FG%, 1.3 spg, 26.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Jason Brown, G, 6-4/Sr. (37.0 3-pt%, 14.5 mpg); Darrick Jackson, G, 5-10/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 76.3 FT%, 1.6 spg, 26.2 mpg); Harold Juluke, F, 6-7/Soph. (9.1 mpg); Joe Rose, C, 6-8/Jr.; Keyon Smith, G, 6-3/Soph.; Samont Washington, F, 6-7/Soph.

Top newcomers: Jay Carter, F, 6-8/Fr.; Rob Doss, F, 6-8/Fr.; Todd Jones, F/C, 6-9/Fr.; Mantas Storpirstis, G/F, 6-4/Fr.

Strengths: The Hawks return the league's top scorer in Justin Bailey, who is particularly dangerous off the dribble. He'll be well-fed by Darrick Jackson, and Chris Eames is a capable interior player. Frontcourt fortifications come courtesy of a deep recruiting class that brings size.

Weaknesses: Three double-figure scorers are gone, and coach Paul Brazeau can't be sure who will pick up the production. Hartford was weak defensively last season, a condition that could get worse if the newcomers don't step up inside. Bailey is great, but it will be interesting to see how he does without such a fine supporting cast.

Outlook: This is a rebuilding season for the Hawks, but next year could be worse, as Bailey and Eames will be gone. Look for Bailey to take about 450 shots this year because nobody else is around. Eames is solid, and Jackson should be OK at the point, but the new big guys have to show they can play immediately. Brazeau also must convince his players to play defense.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: West Hartford, Conn. **Home court:** The Sports Center (4,475).

8. NORTHEASTERN

Coach: Rudy Keeling (21-34, 2 years; 127-156 overall, 10 years).

1997-98 record: 14-14. America East: 9-9/7th.

Starters lost (2): Lamont Clark, F (4.4 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 20.4 mpg); Ty Mack, F (17.3 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 77.9 FT%, 33.2 mpg).

Others lost: Joe Hicks, G (7.4 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 1.4 spg, 19.4 mpg); Scott Martin, G; Rod Smith, C (3.7 rpg, 11.9 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Terry Kringe, G, 6-2/Jr. (7.1 ppg, 80.6 FT%, 1.4 spg, 30.3 mpg); Lin Lattimore, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 24.6 mpg); Harold Miller, G, 5-10/Sr. (13.5 ppg, 46.0 FG%, 75.9 FT%, 4.0 apg, 1.2 spg, 40.2 3-pt%, 29.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Changa Adams, C, 6-9/Jr.; Marcus Blossom, G, 6-2/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 18.2 mpg); John Green, F, 6-8/Sr. (9.9 mpg); Karen Harris, G, 6-3/Soph.

Top newcomers: Mahad Ali, C, 6-9/Fr. (RS); Jean Bain, G, 5-11/Fr. (RS/wrist); Cortez Bond, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Tyrone Hammick, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Michael Rainey, C/F, 6-8/Fr.; Marquis Wright, F, 6-7/Fr.; Tim West, F, 6-6/Fr. (RS).

Strengths: The Huskies are rich at the point, where Harold Miller and Marcus Blossom are capable of running the team—and even playing together at times. Terry Kringe is a solid 3-point shooter, although not as accomplished as Miller, and Lin Lattimore is a load down low. The recruiting class is diverse and talented.

Weaknesses: Northeastern shot the ball well from long range last season, but its work inside the arc was weak (41.5 percent from the field). Although Lattimore weighs 240, he isn't a dominant force. He needs help, and it will be up to Tyrone Hammick and Tim West to provide it. The Huskies also would do better if they shared the ball more. Their 310 assists were disturbingly low last season. And defense should be a problem again.

Outlook: The Huskies have plenty of gaps in their lineup,

particularly up front. But coach Rudy Keeling is excited about his recruiting class, which could help make the future bright. For now, Miller, Lattimore and Kringe must improve their production, and a couple of the fresh faces must produce, or last year's 9-9 record will seem like nirvana.

Last league title: 1991. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1991.

Site: Boston. **Home court:** Cabot Gym (2,500).

9. NEW HAMPSHIRE

Coach: Jeff Jackson (17-37, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 10-17. America East: 6-12/8th.

Starters lost (4): Matt Acres, F (13.4 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 1.1 spg, 36.2 mpg); Carlos Bradberry, G, (9.1 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 73.5 FT%, 4.0 apg, 32.2 mpg); Chris Hibbs, F (5.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 56.3 FG%, 71.4 FT%, 14.9 mpg); Ken Rassi, C (9.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 26.8 mpg).

Others lost: Jamahl Jackson, G (4.4 ppg, 17.1 mpg).

Starters returning (1): Carmen Marciariello, G, 6-4/Jr.

(10.4 ppg, 70.8 FT%, 1.0 spg, 27.2 mpg). **Other returnees:** Andy Cavo, F, 6-6/Soph. (9.9 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 73.9 FT%, 45.1 3-pt%, 21.4 mpg); Ethan Cole, C, 6-10/Soph. (10.7 mpg); Colin Donahue, G, 6-3/Soph. (14.0 mpg); Rob Marquardt, C, 6-10/Soph. (9.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Mike Boyd, F, 6-7/Fr.; Chris Brown, G, 6-4/Fr. (RS); Will Chavis, G, 5-9/Fr.; Assane Faye, F, 6-7/Fr. (RS); Austin Ganly, F, 6-6/Fr.; Jeff Senulis, F, 6-8, Fr.

Strengths: The Wildcats limited rivals to 41.6 percent field-goal shooting last season. And thanks to the team's scarcity of returning offensive production, that ability to stop rivals will be important. Carmen Marciariello is a fine outside shooter. He'll team with Andy Cavo in a potent wing attack, while Will Chavis is expected to run the show.

Weaknesses: Who's going to score? Marciariello and Cavo are solid performers, but neither is a big-time producer. The inside situation is even bleaker, unless a cadre of newcomers—including Jeff Senulis, Mike Boyd and Austin Ganly—gets acclimated quickly. The Wildcats need to step up their production on the boards, cut down on turnovers and commit fewer fouls.

Outlook: The good news is that these 'Cats are young. As the only team in the conference without a senior, New Hampshire can build slowly toward a run at the first division. For now, the Wildcats will take baby steps. If they can manage five league wins, that will be great.

Last league title: 1983 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Durham, N.H. **Home court:** Whittemore Center (7,000).

10. TOWSON

Coach: Mike Jaskulski (8-20, 1 year; 70-68 overall, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 8-20. America East: 4-14/T9th.

Starters lost (2): Ralph Biggs, F (18.4 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 71.8 FT%, 41.5 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 32.9 mpg); Derick Newton, F (9.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 29.9 mpg).

Others lost: DaVonn Harp, C (transfer/Kutztown); Peter Kenah, G; Ryan Lexer, C/F (10.1 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 47.9 FG%, 72.0 FT%, 24.9 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Raul dePablo, G, 5-11/Jr. (5.9 ppg, 83.3 FT%, 29.7 mpg); Alphonso Hawes, C, 6-6/Sr. (4.5 rpg, 23.7 mpg); Marlin Wise, G, 5-11/Jr. (6.5 ppg, 45.6 FG%, 85.2 FT%, 41.4 3-pt%, 3.0 apg, 1.8 spg, 28.2 mpg).

Other returnees: Brian Barber, F, 6-6, Soph.; Damon Cason, G, 5-11/Jr. (4.6 ppg, 1.3 spg, 83.3 FT%, 19.9 mpg).

Top newcomers: Kerry Augustus, F, 6-7/Fr.; Josh Davalli, G/F, 6-6/Soph. (transfer/Mass.-Lowell); Shaun Holtz, F/C, 6-8/Fr.; Pete Mauro, G, 6-2, Jr. (JC); Torin Ragin, G/F, 6-4, Jr. (transfer/Wyoming); Danny White, G, 6-2/Fr.

Strengths: Marlin Wise and Damon Cason are steady distributors, and Raul dePablo is a good outside shooter. Towson led the league in scoring defense after finishing last the year before. The recruiting class brings help at every position.

Weaknesses: Towson had better play some quality defense this year because it lacks any real scoring pop, particularly up front. The Tigers need to improve their rebounding considerably and cut way back on turnovers.

Outlook: In a word, bleak. Towson must find some scorers among its crop of newcomers, improve its ballhandling, rebound with more authority and learn to win on the road (1-11 away from home in '97-98). Coach Mike Jaskulski did a good job last season by making defense a priority. Now, he must concentrate on the other end of the court.

Last league title: 1994 (Big South).

Last NCAA appearance: 1991.

Site: Towson, Md. **Home court:** Towson Center (5,000).

TSN

1. MURRAY STATE

Coach: Tevester Anderson (first year).

1997-98 record: 29-4. OVC: 16-2/1st. Lost to Rhode Island in NCAA Midwest first round.

Starters lost (2): De'Teri Mayes, G (21.5 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 46.9 FG%, 78.4 FT%, 44.0 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 32.5 mpg); Chad Townsend, G (13.8 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 76.2 FT%, 37.5 3-pt%, 5.2 apg, 1.4 spg, 32.4 mpg).

Others lost: Arnell Hamilton, F.

Starters returning (3): Rod Murray, F, 6-7/Jr. (9.5 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 54.2 FG%, 71.2 FT%, 24.8 mpg); Isaac Spencer, F, 6-6/Jr. (13.8 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 63.3 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 30.5 mpg); Duane Virgil, C, 6-9/Sr. (8.2 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 53.9 FG%, 23.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Ray Cunningham, G, 6-5/Soph. (RS/thumb); Michael Floyd, F, 6-7/Sr. (3.6 rpg, 53.8 FG%, 13.6 mpg); Marvin Gay, F, 6-8/Sr. (9.5 mpg); Aaron Page, G, 6-5/Jr. (6.6 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 14.9 mpg); Aubrey Reese, G, 6-0/Jr. (4.6 ppg, 48.9 FG%, 70.7 FT%, 11.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Justin Burdine, G, 6-1/Fr.; Mirek Lopatka, F, 7-0/Soph.; Jay Ragan, G, 5-10/Fr.; Marlon Towns, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: The Racers have won the regular-season conference title 10 of the past 11 years. Isaac Spencer became one of the most dominant players in the league as a sophomore last season. He has shooting range and rebounding ability. JC transfer Marlon Towns, who began his career at Arkansas, is an exceptional talent and should make an immediate impact at forward. The Racers are 77-2 over the past six seasons when they score 80 or more points.

Weaknesses: Losing De'Teri Mayes and Chad Townsend is tough, as both were capable of taking over a game. Mark Gottfried left to coach his alma mater—Alabama—after compiling a 68-24 record in three years at Murray. Tevester Anderson, an assistant to Gottfried the past three seasons, is the new coach.

Outlook: While the competition might be a little more challenging, the Racers are the favorites until somebody knocks them off.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Murray, Ky. **Home court:** Regional Special Events Center (8,500).

2. TENNESSEE STATE

Coach: Frankie Allen (96-103, 7 years; 152-164 overall, 11 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-16. OVC: 8-10/16th.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Kareem Gilbert, G (7.5 ppg, 4.3 apg, 19.5 mpg); Seth Huber, G/F (6.4 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 41.2 3-pt%, 20.3 mpg); Gerald Morris, F (10.6 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Julian Bankston, C, 6-10/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 57.3 FG%, 21.1 mpg); Jason Johnson, F, 6-8/Jr. (13.4 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 31.8 mpg); Jamie Roberts, G, 6-3/Soph. (14.9 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 41.4 FG%, 81.8 FT%, 37.7 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 33.1 mpg); Keith Samuel, F, 6-6/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 22.2 mpg); Kevin Samuel, G, 6-3/Jr. (12.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 3.4 apg, 1.8 spg, 32.1 mpg).

Other returnees: George Parker, F, 6-5/Sr.; Harold Spencer, G, 6-0/Sr.; Brian Williams, G, 5-10/Sr. (4.9 ppg, 19.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Rayan Beane, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Demario Jones, F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48); Ralph Martin, F/C, 6-8/Soph. (Prop 48); Cory Williams, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: The Tigers have the most talent and depth in the conference. Jason Johnson, Kevin Samuel and Jamie Roberts were named freshman of the year in their inaugural seasons. Brian Williams, who began his career at Oregon, took over at point guard down the stretch and did a good job. The Tigers can go nine or 10 deep and not skip a beat.

Weaknesses: Despite all this talent, something has been missing. At times, the Tigers are undisciplined and take ill-advised shots. They have a tendency of not involving Johnson in the offense. After being picked to finish second last year, they ended the regular season with a losing record but advanced to the conference tourney title game.

Outlook: On paper, the Tigers are good enough to run away with the conference, but they too often shoot

themselves in the foot. They will contend, but they have to avoid lapses (like when they lost to Morehead State at home last year) to win the league.

Last league title: 1995 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Nashville. **Home court:** Gentry Center (11,000).

3. AUSTIN PEAY

Coach: Dave Loos (110-119, 8 years; 192-172 overall, 12 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-11. OVC: 11-7/4th.

Starters lost (3): Reggie Crenshaw, F (10.9 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 45.1 FG%, 73.1 FT%, 2.2 spg, 1.8 bpg, 29.2 mpg); Joe Sibbitt, G (10.4 ppg, 83.7 FT%, 35.3 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 30.6 mpg); Mike Witherspoon, F (4.5 ppg, 58.3 FG%, 15.0 mpg).

Others lost: Josh Hallatt, C, Jake Powers, F (5.5 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 47.4 3-pt%, 24.1 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Jerome Jackson, F, 6-5/Sr. (13.4 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 56.8 FG%, 1.3 spg, 25.4 mpg); James Stewart, F, 6-5/Soph. (9.5 ppg, 16.7 mpg).

Other returnees: J.J. Halliburton, G, 5-8/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 14.4 mpg); Mike Head, F, 6-8/Jr. (52.2 FG%); Willie Ivory, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (4.7 ppg, 1.1 spg, 17.5 mpg); Joey Tuck, G, 6-2/Jr.

Top newcomers: Andrew Dagner, F/C, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Kevin Easley, G, 6-1/Fr.; Larry Finch Jr., G, 5-10/Jr. (transfer/Memphis); Trenton Hassell, F/G, 6-5/Soph. (Prop 48); Brad Loos, G, 6-2/Fr. (RS); Nick Stapleton, G, 6-1/Soph. (Prop 48); Richard Whitfield, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Jerome Jackson blossomed as a shooter, finishing with the third-best percentage in the conference. James Stewart turned out to be a steal of a recruit, as he developed into a scorer late in the season. But the biggest coup of Dave Loos' tenure was getting Trenton Hassell, who missed last year as a Prop 48, to commit. Hassell can play four positions and has the athletic ability to be a star.

Weaknesses: Losing Joe Sibbitt, the OVC's all-time 3-point shooter, and Reggie Crenshaw means the Governors have to replace a lot of leadership. Hassell has the skills and potential, but he may be rusty after sitting out.

Outlook: The Governors won six of their last eight games a year ago, primarily because of the emergence of Stewart. If he and Hassell live up to their potential, Austin Peay can compete for the championship.

Last league title: 1997 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Clarksville, Tenn. **Home court:** Dunn Center (9,000).

4. MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Coach: Randy Wiel (38-21, 2 years; 70-71 overall, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 19-9. OVC: 12-6/3rd.

Starters lost (3): Mantia Callender, C (5.7 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 50.4 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 21.6 mpg); K.J. Harden, G (6.3 ppg, 41.1 3-pt%, 25.7 mpg); Aylton Tesch, F (13.6 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 1.8 spg, 29.6 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (2): Richard Duncan, G, 6-1/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 74.0 FT%, 4.2 apg, 1.9 spg, 28.8 mpg); Freddie Martinez, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (12.3 ppg, 76.8 FT%, 40.7 3-pt%, 27.4 mpg).

Other returnees: Kent Ayer, G, 6-1/Sr. (4.8 ppg, 81.1 FT%, 13.3 mpg); Reggie Marshall, G, 6-0/Soph.; Ali McGhee, F, 6-6/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 18.3 mpg); Lee Nosse, C, 6-11/Soph. (76.0 FT%, 10.3 mpg); Kevin White, G, 6-2/Soph. (11.5 mpg).

Top newcomers: Johnny Cobb, C/F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Allen Hatchett, G, 5-10/Jr. (transfer/SE Missouri); Sam Hylton, F, 6-7/Sr. (JC); Gerald King, F/G, 6-3/Soph. (transfer/Coastal Carolina); Elious Swanigan, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Dale Thomas, F, 6-6/Soph. (Prop 48); Cedrick Wallace, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Since arriving, Randy Wiel has guided an undersized team that lacks offensive punch to 38 wins. Wiel, a former North Carolina player and assistant, has the Blue Raiders buying into the Tar Heels' team concept. Cedrick Wallace and Dale Thomas should step in and provide offensive punch and depth. Allen Hatchett should see significant time at point guard.

Weaknesses: With the graduation of Aylton Tesch, the Blue Raiders lost their leading scorer and rebounder. Point guard Richard Duncan often plays out of control; instead of running the offense, he has a habit of trying to create it. Freddie Martinez is a pure shooter, but the swingman still has a way to go defensively. Last sea-

BY KEVIN SPAIN

Murfreesboro (Tenn.) News Journal

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Murray St. | 6. E. Kentucky |
| 2. Tennessee St. | 7. E. Illinois |
| 3. Austin Peay | 8. UT Martin |
| 4. Middle Tenn. | 9. Tenn. Tech |
| 5. SE Missouri | 10. Morehead St. |

ALL-OVC

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
C	BUD ELEY, SE Missouri State	6-10/260	Sr.
F	JASON JOHNSON, Tennessee State	6-8/225	Jr.
F	ISAAC SPENCER, Murray State	6-6/220	Jr.
G/F	FREDDIE MARTINEZ, Middle Tennessee	6-5/205	Jr.
G	JAMIE ROBERTS, Tennessee State	6-3/185	Soph.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/C	RYAN DeMICHAEL, UT Martin	6-9/220	Sr.
F/G	TRENTON HASSELL, Austin Peay	6-5/195	Soph.
F	JEROME JACKSON, Austin Peay	6-5/210	Sr.
G	KEVIN SAMUEL, Tennessee State	6-3/200	Jr.
G/F	MARLON TOWNS, Murray State	6-5/230	Jr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BUD ELEY, C, SE Missouri State



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

TRENTON HASSELL, F/G, Austin Peay

HONOR ROLL

- Best shooter:** Cory Johnson, SE Missouri State.
- Best rebounder:** Ryan DeMichael, UT-Martin.
- Best playmaker:** Jack Owens, Eastern Illinois.
- Best defender:** Richard Duncan, Middle Tennessee State.
- Best leaper:** Isaac Spencer, Murray State.
- Most versatile:** Trenton Hassell, Austin Peay.
- Most flamboyant:** Willie Ivory, Austin Peay.
- Best NBA prospect:** Bud Eley, SE Missouri State.



son, the team fell apart down the stretch, losing five of its last seven.

Outlook: Wiel has worked his magic to produce a solid team. If he gets the newcomers to contribute and gets improved play from Lee Nosse, the Blue Raiders will contend for the title.

Last league title: 1989 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1989. **Site:** Murfreesboro, Tenn. **Home court:** Hale Arena (11,520).

5. SE MISSOURI STATE

Coach: Gary Garner (14-13, 1 year; 262-176 overall, 15 years). **1997-98 record:** 14-13. OVC: 10-8/5th.

Starters lost (1): Calvert White, F (10.2 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 35.7 3-pt%, 3.6 apg, 35.1 mpg).

Others lost: Lakeo Keller, G; Travis Smith, F (73.1 FT%, 12.6 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Kahn Cotton, G, 5-10/Sr. (12.2 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 4.0 apg, 1.8 spg, 32.7 mpg); Cory Johnson, G, 6-0/Sr. (14.5 ppg, 87.3 FT%, 43.4 3-pt%, 34.7 mpg); David Montgomery, F, 6-8/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 62.1 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 27.7 mpg); Demetrius Watson, F, 6-4/Sr. (8.8 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 55.6 FG%, 25.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Bud Eley, C, 6-10/Sr. (15.0 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 51.3 FG%, 1.2 spg, 1.5 bpg, 27.3 mpg); Matt Morris, G, 6-2/Soph.; Nathan Owen, G, 6-2/Soph. (5.3 ppg, 17.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Fred Abraham, G, 6-0/Fr.; Jeremy Biles, G, 5-11/Soph. (transfer/Saint Louis); Mike Branson, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Brian Bunche, C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Drew DeMond, F, 6-7/Fr.; Roderick Johnson, F, 6-6/Jr. (transfer/Wisconsin-Milwaukee).

Strengths: Center Bud Eley, who has the potential to be the most dominant player in the league, pulled out of the NBA draft and is happy. The 260-pound Detroit native, who missed 16 games last year with foot fractures, constantly had problems with former coach Ron Shumate. But with new coach Gary Garner, Eley seemed to have more fire. Power forward David Montgomery is a solid player inside and a nice complement to Eley. Guard Cory Johnson is a streaky shooter who led the team in scoring last season.

Weaknesses: Sometimes Eley has a tendency to make big mistakes in key games, like losing his cool and committing a senseless foul. Johnson can post big numbers—if he has an open shot. He's not good at creating.

Outlook: This will be the third year that the bulk of this team has played together. If Eley performs to his capabilities, the Indians will be a factor.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Cape Girardeau, Mo. **Home court:** Show Me Center (7,000).

6. EASTERN KENTUCKY

Coach: Scott Perry (10-17, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 10-17. OVC: 8-10/16th.

Starters lost (5): Shane Carnes, G (11.8 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 47.3 3-pt%, 3.7 apg, 2.0 spg, 28.1 mpg; academically ineligible); Aaron Cecil, C (8.0 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 45.3 FG%, 76.0 FT%, 24.2 mpg); David Evans, F (6.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 1.6 spg, 20.1 mpg; transfer); Daniel Sutton, F (10.3 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 1.4 spg, 27.5 mpg); Mark Williams, G (13.3 ppg, 78.2 FT%, 1.3 spg, 26.4 mpg; quit team).

Others lost: Eric Addie, G (4.1 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 18.6 mpg; left school); Ibrahim Myles, C/F (4.8 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 53.6 FG%, 16.2 mpg; left team); Marty Thomas, G/F (10.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 26.2 mpg; back injury).

Starters returning: None.

Other returnees: Chris Fitzgerald, G, 6-0/Sr. (5.7 ppg, 97.1 FT%, 38.7 3-pt%, 14.7 mpg); Warren Stukes, F, 6-6/Sr. (3.8 rpg, 57.9 FG%, 14.2 mpg).

Top newcomers: Darius Acuff, G, 6-2/Soph. (Prop 48); Mario Duncan, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Ronnie Griffin, F/C, 6-9/Soph. (Prop 48); Sam Hoskin, F, 6-8/Fr.; Darick Mattox, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Will Morris, G/F, 6-4/Fr.; Whitney Robinson, G, 5-11/Fr.; Charles Thomas, G/F, 6-4/Jr. (transfer/Minnesota); Keanan Weir, F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: A bold new recruiting effort has brought in nine players. One, swingman Charles Thomas, was a prominent player on the Minnesota team that played in the Final Four in 1997. Mario Duncan was the Alabama junior college player of the year last season. Ronnie Griffin played at prep power Maine Central Institute, where he was a dominant force inside.

Weaknesses: By bringing in these new players, several veterans decided to bolt. Mark Williams, who led the team in scoring last season, and Shane Carnes, the second-leading scorer, departed, feeling their playing time would

be drastically reduced.

Outlook: The Colonels have loaded up with JC imports who should step in and be productive, but how quickly they mesh will determine if they can finish in the top five. **Last league title:** 1979. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1979. **Site:** Richmond, Ky. **Home court:** McBrayer Arena (6,500).

7. EASTERN ILLINOIS

Coach: Rick Samuels (262-254, 18 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 16-11. OVC: 13-5/2nd.

(NOTE: Minutes per game unavailable.)

Starters lost (2): Rick Kaye, G (21.1 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 3.1 apg); Conya Robinson, F (4.2 ppg, 6.2 rpg).

Others lost: Kurt Cuffie, F (4.7 ppg); Eric Frankford, C (5.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg); Scott Newman, F; Idris Osei-Agyeman, G/F; Jason Sowers, G.

Starters returning (3): Jack Owens, G, 6-2/Sr. (12.3 ppg, 12.3 rpg, 52.5 FG%, 77.8 FT%, 1.6 spg, 3.4 apg); Marc Polite, F, 6-5/Jr. (10.3 ppg, 3.3 rpg); John Smith, F (5.7 ppg, 4.5 rpg; academically ineligible at least the first semester).

Other returnees: Keith Hibbler, F, 6-7/Jr.; Kyle Hill, G, 6-2/Soph. (5.4 ppg); Greg Kistow, G, 5-10/Soph. (3.8 ppg); Michael Shaver, C, 6-10/Sr.

Top newcomers: Todd Bergmann, F, 6-7/Fr.; Matt Britton, G, 6-1/Jr. (transfer/Indianapolis); Henry Dornier, G, 6-2/Fr.; Michael Forest, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Merv Joseph, F, 6-3/Soph. (JC); Luke Mueller, G, 5-11/Fr.; Luke Sharp, F/C, 6-8/Fr.; Jan Thompson, C, 6-11/Fr.

Strengths: Jack Owens emerged as a solid point guard last season and is the only senior who should start for the Panthers. Marc Polite has shown flashes of brilliance; he can score in bunches and drives well despite his slender frame (190 pounds).

Weaknesses: The Panthers must replace Rick Kaye, who ranked second in the league in scoring last season. Kaye was a solid all-around player who could carry the team. The Panthers have not fared well in the league tournament, losing in the first round in each of the past two seasons despite being one of the top seeds each year.

Outlook: The Panthers have taken the league by surprise in each of their first two seasons. This season should be different. Without Kaye, Owens and Polite will have to carry the scoring load and the team will have to overcome its lack of height. Eastern Illinois will have trouble cracking the top six.

Last league title: 1991 (Mid-Continent).

Last NCAA appearance: 1992.

Site: Charleston, Ill. **Home court:** Lantz Gym (5,600).

8. UT-MARTIN

Coach: Cal Luther (59-131, 7 years; 486-444 overall, 37 years). **1997-98 record:** 7-20. OVC: 5-13/18th.

Starters lost (2): Art Castle, G (5.0 ppg, 23.0 mpg); Hamp Harper, F/G (6.3 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 3.3 apg, 1.0 spg, 28.8 mpg).

Others lost: Roger Castle, G (71.4 FT%, 46.0 3-pt%, 16.3 MPG); Robin Cude, G (4.9 ppg, 35.4 3-pt%, 17.4 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Joe Crumby, F, 6-8/Sr. (13.1 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 52.2 FG%, 72.8 FT%, 1.4 spg, 33.5 mpg); Ryan DeMichael, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (14.9 ppg, 9.8 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 1.4 spg, 2.0 bpg, 34.0 mpg); Jason Ohlsen, G, 6-2/Sr. (10.5 ppg, 86.3 FT%, 1.3 spg, 29.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Adam Hassett, C, 6-9/Sr. (12.3 mpg).

Top newcomers: Andrae Betts, G, 5-9/Fr.; Ben Corley, G/F, 6-5/Fr.; Daniel Grubbs, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Eric Johnson, G, 5-9/Fr.; Steve Jordan, G/F, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Morris Robinson, F, 6-7/Fr.

Strengths: The ability of this team to be patient makes it dangerous. Coach Cal Luther may not have the most talent, but his clubs usually are among the league's most disciplined. Ryan DeMichael is an all-conference player who is quick enough to play on the perimeter and strong enough to man the post. Forward Joe Crumby has developed into a solid player.

Weaknesses: Crumby and DeMichael are the tallest players on the roster. The Skyhawks finished last in the league in rebounding and were next-to-last in scoring.

Outlook: This will be the first year that UT-Martin has been eligible for the conference title after its move from Division II to Division I seven years ago. Still, the Skyhawks are a few years from assembling enough talent to contend for the title.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Martin, Tenn. **Home court:** Skyhawk Arena (6,700).

9. TENNESSEE TECH

Coach: Jeff Lebo (first year).

1997-98 record: 9-21. OVC: 5-13/18th.

Starters lost (2): Ricky Cabrera, G (11.0 ppg, 26.2 mpg); Albert Wilson, G (9.1 ppg, 3.0 apg, 1.7 spg, 26.5 mpg).

Others lost: Alex Franco, F (11.1 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 48.6 FG%, 2.4 spg, 1.8 bpg, 26.9 mpg; quit team); Marc Glanton, G (1.3 spg, 18.1 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Adonis Hart, C, 6-8/Soph. (4.5 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 52.9 FG%, 75.0 FT%, 15.2 mpg); Reggie Nelson, F, 6-7/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 50.7 FG%, 19.2 mpg); Wesley Whitehorn, F, 6-6/Sr. (10.0 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 46.1 FG%, 28.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Eric Akins, C, 6-9/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 1.1 bpg, 21.1 mpg); DeAntoine Beasley, G, 6-6/Soph. (13.5 mpg); Charles Haney, G/F, 6-4/Jr.; Ricardo Woodfine, G/F, 6-2/Sr. (5.8 ppg, 17.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Martin Fears, G, 5-10/Fr.; Arnaldo Febres, F, 6-8/Fr. (RS); Josh Heard, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Corey Hemphill, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Collins Rouse, G, 6-1/Fr.; Joey Westmoreland, F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: Nobody on the roster averaged more than 30 minutes last season. Forward Wesley Whitehorn, who is the top returning scorer and rebounder, topped that list, playing a little more than 28 minutes per contest. Center Adonis Hart was developing last year when he hurt his knee. Forward Reggie Nelson is an emerging talent.

Weaknesses: Alex Franco returned to Spain after a tumultuous year in which, despite the fact that he was the team's leading scorer and rebounder, he frequently feuded with coach Frank Harrell. The Eagles finished last in the league in 3-point shooting, free-throw shooting and scoring.

Outlook: New coach Jeff Lebo, another in a long line of former North Carolina assistants, will try to reverse the fortunes of the Eagles, who failed to record double-digit wins for the first time in 10 years. They will have to battle to avoid the cellar.

Last league title: 1985. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1963.

Site: Cookeville, Tenn. **Home court:** Eblen Center (10,152).

10. MOREHEAD ST.

Coach: Kyle Macy (3-23, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 3-23. OVC: 2-16/10th.

Starters lost (2): Aaron Knight, G/F (11.4 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 73.2 FT%, 1.3 spg, 27.0 mpg); Chris Stone, F (8.8 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 51.2 FG%, 1.0 spg, 29.3 mpg).

Others lost: Hezzie Boone, G (9.1 ppg, 92.3 FT%, 28.2 mpg); Brandon Davenport, G (6.5 ppg, 83.9 FT%, 17.8 mpg); Luke Lloyd, C (8.1 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 20.1 mpg); Dennie Webb, G.

Starters returning (3): Ted Docks, G, 5-8/Sr. (5.3 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 73.1 FT%, 4.4 apg, 1.9 spg, 33.0 mpg); Dewayne Krom, C, 6-9/Soph. (9.6 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 45.1 FG%, 25.2 mpg); Jeremy Webb, F, 6-6/Jr. (10.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 41.4 3-pt%, 29.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Thomas Jenkins, G/F, 6-4/Soph. (15.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brett Bohanan, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Erik Brown, F, 6-5/Fr.; Scott Charity, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Brad Cleaver, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Bernard Evans, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Dewane Samuels, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Kyle Umberger, F, 6-7/Fr.; Bobby Washington, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Ted Docks is one of the most consistent point guards in the conference. Not flashy, not a big scorer, Docks knows his role as team quarterback. Coach Kyle Macy has pulled in some good recruits, led by Erik Brown, an all-star from Lexington, Ky.

Weaknesses: The Eagles have had only two winning seasons this decade. Last year, they closed with 10 consecutive losses. Macy came in with a more disciplined philosophy, and while the Eagles had trouble winning, they were competitive. Still, it was the school's worst record ever.

Outlook: It appears that Macy, a former Kentucky star who had no coaching experience before last season, will make improvements. But the Eagles are a long way from contending. Look for Morehead State to dwell in the cellar again.

Last league title: 1984. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1984.

Site: Morehead, Ky. **Home court:** Ellis T. Johnson Arena (6,500).

TSN

NORTHERN
DIVISION

1. DAVIDSON

Coach: Bob McKillop (138-120, 9 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 20-10. Southern/Northern Division: 13-2/T1st. Lost to Michigan in NCAA South first round.

Starters lost (1): Mark Donnelly, G (14.6 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 39.0 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 32.4 mpg).

Others lost: Brian Allenspach, C (transfer); Billy Armstrong, G (4.0 ppg, 18.0 mpg); Chris Stec, G.

Starters returning (4): Davor Halbauer, G, 6-3/Jr. (6.4 ppg, 73.0 FT%, 35.8 3-pt%, 22.5 mpg); Landry Kosmalksi, F, 6-7/Jr. (9.3 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 1.0 spg, 24.9 mpg); Stephen Marshall, C, 6-8/Jr. (9.6 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 50.2 FG%, 74.5 FT%, 43.3 3-pt%, 19.9 mpg); Ali Ton, G, 6-0/Sr. (4.9 ppg, 74.5 FT%, 6.4 apg, 2.2 spg, 27.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Jeff Bergmann, G, 6-3/Jr.; David Burns, F, 6-7/Sr. (5.3 ppg, 10.8 mpg); Ben Ebong, F, 6-7/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 51.6 FG%, 1.0 spg, 51.6 FG%, 22.2 mpg); Emeka Egege, G, 6-4/Soph.; Chadd Holmes, C, 6-9/Sr. (5.2 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 47.3 FG%, 36.4 3-pt%, 14.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Michael Bree, G, 6-0/Fr. (RS); Martin Ides, C, 7-2/Fr.; Chris Pearson, F, 6-7/Fr.; Brian Turner, G/F, 6-4/Fr. **Strengths:** With coach Bob McKillop's proven system in high gear, the Wildcats will be the league's most experienced team and easily its deepest. Ali Ton will have an all-veteran cast looking for his passes. Ben Ebong might be the Southern's toughest to defend, and Emeka Egege will be the league's best sixth man. Freshman Martin Ides makes the list of contributors 10 deep. All four returning starters are capable 3-point shooters.

Weaknesses: With no starter taller than 6-8, the Wildcats again will have size matchup problems. The transfer of 6-10 Brian Allenspach weakened a strong bench.

Outlook: The Wildcats appear to be considerably stronger than they were a year ago, especially if new starter Davor Halbauer fulfills his potential as a slasher and scorer. Davidson again should win 20, run away with the Northern Division title and outrun Charleston for the league championship.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Davidson, N.C. **Home court:** Belk Arena (5,700).

2. APPALACHIAN ST.

Coach: Buzz Peterson (35-22, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 21-8. Southern/Northern Division: 13-2/T1st.

Starters lost (2): Tige Darner, G/F (11.8 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 1.1 spg, 31.8 mpg); Kareem Livingston, F (12.4 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 62.8 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 29.7 mpg).

Others lost: Clint Crosston, F/C; Teron McFadden, G/F; Terence Tyler, G/F (55.7 FG%, 10.2 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Blair Adderly, G, 6-5/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 73.0 FT%, 25.4 mpg); Tyson Patterson, G, 5-9/Jr. (10.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 5.5 apg, 1.9 spg, 29.4 mpg); Marshall Phillips, F, 6-5/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 49.1 FG%, 39.5 3-pt%, 1.4 spg, 24.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Ian Adams, G, 5-11/Sr. (5.0 ppg, 70.4 FT%, 38.5 3-pt%, 15.3 mpg); Seneca Fritts, G, 5-10/Jr.; Josh Grover, C, 7-0/Sr. (15.0 mpg); Matt McMahon, G, 6-0/Jr. (5.3 ppg, 70.2 FT%, 12.7 mpg); Kent Phillips, G, 6-6/Jr.

Top newcomers: Shawn Alexander, G, 6-2/Fr.; Jonathan Butler, G, 6-0/Fr.; Andrew Davis, F, 6-7/Fr.; Cedrick Holmes, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Mike Coffey, F, 6-7/Fr. (RS); Roderick Stevenson, G, 6-3/Soph. (JC).

Strengths: Tyson Patterson, Marshall Phillips and Blair Adderly form a quality perimeter crew. Patterson's ballhandling ability creates scoring opportunities for the entire cast. Patterson's penetration skills also will create easy baskets for JC transfer Cedrick Holmes.

Weaknesses: Depth will be a problem if JC transfer Roderick Stevenson and freshman guards Shawn Alexander and Jonathan Butler are slow to produce. Other than Josh Grover, who is unproven in terms of endurance, the Mountaineers have no player taller than 6-7.

Outlook: With Patterson penetrating and dishing and Alexander adding firepower from the bench, ASU again will be among the league's best offensive teams. The difference between another 21-win season and a so-so season hinges

largely on the interior defense supplied by Holmes and Grover.

Last league title: 1981. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1989. **Site:** Boone, N.C. **Home court:** Varsity Gym (8,000).

3. UNC-GREENSBORO

Coach: Randy Peele (39-49, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 9-19. Southern/Northern Division: 6-9/T4th.

Starters lost (3): Larry Gilbert, C (8.9 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 72.3 FT%, 25.0 mpg); Matt Javit, F (8.9 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 2.7 apg, 28.7 mpg); Derrick Nix, G (11.9 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 3.3 apg, 1.1 spg, 75.5 FT%, 32.3 mpg).

Starters returning (2): Demetrius Cherry, F, 6-8/Sr. (12.9 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 54.1 FG%, 72.3 FT%, 1.2 spg, 30.1 mpg); Nathan Jameson, G, 6-2/Soph. (8.1 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 2.9 apg, 37.0 3-pt%, 31.3 mpg).

Other returnees: Aaron Chavis, F, 6-7/Soph. (4.6 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 16.2 mpg); Warren Cunningham, G, 6-2/Jr.; Justin Stewart, F, 6-5/Sr. (6.5 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 45.5 3-pt%, 17.5 mpg); Ricardo Trevisan, C, 6-10/Sr.; Geoff Williams, F, 6-4/Soph.; Randy Woodard, F, 6-7/Sr.

Top newcomers: Luke Boythe, F, 6-8/Fr.; Sam Brinson, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Courtney Eldridge, G, 5-9/Fr.; Ray Henry, G, 6-3/Fr.; James Maye, F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: A frontcourt crew of Demetrius Cherry, Ricardo Trevisan and Aaron Chavis might be the league's strongest and deepest. Nathan Jameson, injured early last year as a freshman, flashed potential to be among the league's best guards.

Weaknesses: Perimeter shooting, a problem last year, remains a question. The Spartans shot just 42.7 percent from the field and 33.5 percent on 3-pointers last season.

Outlook: After going 9-19 in its first Southern Conference season, the former Big South team should be considerably stronger on both ends of the court. Cherry will become a dominant force, creating some easy scoring opportunities on the wing. Much depends on the shooting ability of the newcomers.

Last league title: 1996 (Big South).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Greensboro, N.C. **Home court:** Fleming Gym (2,320).

4. VMI

Coach: Bart Bellairs (54-56, 4 years; 75-83 overall, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 14-13. Southern/Northern Division: 8-7/3rd.

Starters lost (2): Darryl Faulkner, G (15.4 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 39.5 FG%, 81.2 FT%, 5.0 apg, 1.9 spg, 32.7 mpg); Mike Spinelli, C (4.5 ppg, 2.3 rpg, 15.7 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Jason Bell, G, 6-1/Sr. (16.3 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 40.6 FG%, 73.8 FT%, 2.9 spg, 2.4 apg, 29.7 mpg); Aaron Demory, F, 6-3/Jr. (10.7 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 60.9 FT%, 1.7 spg, 30.1 mpg); Eric Mann, F, 6-9/Jr. (6.6 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 26.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Richard Bruce, G, 6-3/Soph. (6.1 ppg, 2.1 rpg, 1.7 apg, 20.9 mpg); Matt Matheny, F, 6-4/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 2.5 rpg, 13.0 mpg); Andre Quarles, G, Jr. (RS); Nick Richardson, F, 6-7/Soph. (6.4 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 78.6 FT%, 14.3 mpg); Aaron Trombley, F, 6-8/Soph.

Top newcomers: Zach Batte, F, 6-9/Fr.; Tim Cole, C, 6-9/Fr.; Mark Grigsby, G, 6-2/Fr.; Renard Phillips, G, 5-7/Fr.

Strengths: Jason Bell and Aaron Demory are strong, consistent scorers with go-to ability when games are on the line. The ability to maintain coach Bart Bellairs' up-tempo style for 40 minutes is a late-game asset.

Weaknesses: Lack of size again will create problems. Depth also is lacking, especially in the frontcourt.

Outlook: The Keydets, annual overachievers in Bellairs' first four seasons, have a shot at consecutive winning seasons for the first time in 21 years. In Bellairs' wide-open attack, Bell's perimeter shooting and Demory's versatility could again make VMI a .500 team. The lack of inside strength makes anything beyond that unlikely.

Last league title: 1977. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1977. **Site:** Lexington, Va. **Home court:** Cameron Hall (5,029).

5. E. TENNESSEE ST.

Coach: Ed DeChellis (18-36, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 11-16. Southern/Northern Division: 6-9/T4th.

Starters lost (1): Troy Seymour, G (7.1 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 39.3 FG%, 80.0 FT%, 1.9 apg, 29.3 mpg).

Others lost: None.

Starters returning (4): Kyle Keeton, G, 6-0/Sr. (10.2 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 44.6 FG%, 66.0 FT%, 1.4 spg, 2.3 apg, 28.6 mpg); Adrian

BY ABE HARDESTY
Greenville (S.C.) News

PREDICTIONS

NORTHERN
DIVISION

1. Davidson
2. Appalachian St.
3. UNC-Greensboro
4. VMI
5. E. Tennessee St.
6. Western Carolina

SOUTHERN
DIVISION

1. Charleston
2. UT Chattanooga
3. Furman
4. Wofford
5. Ga. Southern
6. The Citadel

ALL-SOUTHERN

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	DEMETRIUS CHERRY, UNC Greensboro	6-8/235	Sr.
F	BEN EBONG, Davidson	6-7/220	Sr.
F/C	SEDRIC WEBBER, Charleston	6-6/200	Sr.
G	JASON BELL, VMI	6-1/185	Sr.
G	GREG STEPHENS, East Tennessee State	6-2/180	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	ISSAC CONNER, UT Chattanooga	6-6/185	Sr.
F	MARSHALL PHILLIPS, Appalachian St.	6-5/200	Sr.
F	CEDRIC MCGINNIS, Georgia Southern	6-8/213	Sr.
G	TYSON PATTERSON, Appalachian St.	5-9/155	Jr.
G	ALI TON, Davidson	6-0/180	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

GREG STEPHENS, G, E. Tennessee St.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

STANISLAV MAKSHANTSEV, F, Furman

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Wes Moore, UT-Chadanooga.

Best rebounder: Demetrius Cherry, UNC Greensboro.

Best playmaker: Ali Ton, Davidson.

Best defender: Jason Bell, VMI.

Best leaper: Dondrell Whitmore, Western Carolina.

Most versatile: Sedric Webber, College of Charleston.

Most flamboyant: Tyson Patterson, Appalachian State.

Best NBA prospect: Demetrius Cherry, UNC Greensboro.



Meeks, C, 6-5/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 50.4 FG%, 53.4 FT%, 25.3 mpg); Greg Stephens, G, 6-2/Sr. (17.2 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 76.3 FT%, 1.7 spg, 5.1 apg, 33.4 mpg); Reggie Todd, F, 6-7/Sr. (12.8 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 52.7 FG%, 50.9 FT%, 1.1 spg, 33.8 mpg).
Other returnees: Erskin Anavitarate, G, 6-0/Jr.; D.J. McDuffie, G/F, 6-2/Soph. (4.6 ppg); Gareth Davis, F/C, 6-9/Jr.; Ryan Wilson, C, 6-9/Sr. (3.5 ppg, 13.9 mpg); Andy Huckabay, G/F, 6-2/Soph.; Gabe Lisicky, G, 6-0/Jr.

Top newcomers: Dimeco Childress, G, 6-3/Fr.; Cliff Decoster, G, 6-0/Fr.; Leo Murray, F, 6-5/Jr. (transfer/Xavier).

Strengths: Greg Stephens, a 26-year-old former military man, gives the Bucs a solid scorer and excellent floor leader. Kyle Keeton is a capable playmaker. Reggie Todd adds scoring punch from in close.

Weaknesses: With Todd and Ryan Wilson the only players over 6-3, the Bucs will have matchup problems—especially on Saturday afternoons, when Todd's religious convictions force him off the court.

Outlook: Fundamental improvement, especially in shot selection and defense, enabled ETSU to hike its win total from seven to 11. The Bucs should climb a bit more this season, putting their first winning season since '94 within reach.

Last league title: 1992 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1992. **Site:** Johnson City, Tenn. **Home court:** Memorial Center (13,000).

6. WESTERN CAROLINA

Coach: Phil Hopkins (43-41, 3 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 12-15. Southern/Northern Division: 6-9/T4th.

Starters lost (4): Derrick Drummond, G (4.3 ppg, 77.8 FT%, 17.4 mpg); Joel Fleming, G (11.0 ppg, 43.5 FG%, 75.0 FT%, 42.5 3-pt%, 5.1 apg, 1.5 spg, 31.5 mpg); Jarvis Graham, F (9.6 ppg, 5.1 ppg, 46.1 FG%, 1.0 spg, 26.1 mpg); Bobby Phillips, F (16.9 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 46.0 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 1.2 spg, 33.4 mpg).
Others lost: Paul Cuthbertson, G (13.9 mpg).

Starters returning (1): Dondrell Whitmore, F, 6-6/Sr. (10.6 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 55.1 FG%, 26.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Joey Bryson, F (5.4 ppg, 50.4 FG%, 36.4 3-pt%, 13.1 mpg); Brett Carey, G (11.1 ppg); Stacy Ervin, G (6.7 ppg, 18.8 mpg); Chad Wall, G.

Top newcomers: Michael Green, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC); DeWayne Hood, F, 6-0/Fr.; Collin Kearns, C, 6-9/Fr.; Cory Largent, F, 6-6/Fr.; John Lewis, G, 6-4/Fr.; Michael Palovich, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Casey Rogers, G, 6-0/Fr.; Todd Seibert, C, 6-9/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: JC transfers Michael Green and Todd Seibert join Dondrell Whitmore to form a potentially strong interior. Freshman point guard Casey Rogers has the potential to ignite an offense.

Weaknesses: Three probable starters have no Division I experience, and Whitmore is the squad's only proven man with 30-minute durability. Size will be adequate, but depth is a problem.

Outlook: Meshing eight new players into the system will take time, but it eventually will provide the Catamounts with a lineup that is stronger defensively, especially in the frontcourt. The potential is there for better things in 1999-2000.

Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996. **Site:** Cullowhee, N.C. **Home court:** Ramsey Center (7,826).

SOUTHERN DIVISION

1. CHARLESTON

Coach: John Kresse (465-118, 19 years; 1-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 24-6. TAAC East: 14-2/1st. Lost to Stanford in NCAA Midwest first round.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Derrick Braddick, F; Marc Hines, F (5.3 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 49.1 FG%, 77.8 FT%, 1.1 spg, 27.7 mpg).

Starters returning (5): Carlos Brown, F, 6-5/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 48.6 FG%, 46.7 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 25.2 mpg); Shane McCravy, G, 5-11/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 47.0 FG%, 77.7 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 4.5 apg, 2.1 spg, 27.7 mpg); Jermel President, G, 5-11/Sr. (10.3 ppg, 71.7 FT%, 1.1 spg, 24.1 mpg); Carl Thomas, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.8 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 39.3 3-pt%, 1.2 bpg, 1.0 spg, 23.8 mpg); Sedric Webber, F/C, 6-6/Sr. (15.1 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 2.3 spg, 31.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Michael Feenana, F, 6-6/Jr.; Kevin Glover, C, 6-8/Soph.; Danny Johnson, G, 6-3/Sr. (7.7 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 72.6 FT%, 21.8 mpg); Tyrone Nelson, G, 5-11/Soph.

Top newcomers: Jeff Bolton, G, 6-3/Fr. (RS); Leighton Bowie, F, 6-6/Fr.; Rodgie Leggett, F, 6-7/Fr.; Jody Lumpkin, C, 6-8/Soph. (transfer/Rice); Marco Sanders, F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: The return of five starters means the Cougars have experience and talent. In their first Southern season, they also will have depth: Post man Jody Lumpkin, a Rice transfer, figures to unseat one starter, and 3-point shooter

Jeff Bolton likely will unseat another. Sedric Webber was the TAAC Player of the Year last season.

Weaknesses: Opponents such as North Carolina and South Carolina will make the Cougars' front line look small, but it will be plenty big enough for most foes.

Outlook: Coach John Kresse has orchestrated five consecutive TAAC championship seasons, and he has an all-veteran cast perfectly timed for the Cougars' Southern Conference debut. Expect another 20-win season from a team that could have top 20 credentials.

Last league title: 1998 (TAAC). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1998. **Site:** Charleston, S.C. **Home courts:** John Kresse Arena (3,500); North Charleston Coliseum (12,000).

2. UT CHATTANOOGA

Coach: Henry Dickerson (13-15, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 13-15. Southern/Southern Division: 7-7/1st.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Billy Hutchins, G; Lance Parr, F; Romie Reed, F (9.5 mpg); Lincoln Walters, G.

Starters returning (5): Isaac Conner, F, 6-6/Sr. (10.9 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 1.0 spg, 31.8 mpg); Otis Donald, F, 6-8/Soph. (3.2 rpg, 15.3 mpg); Idris Harper, G, 6-3/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 16.7 mpg); Wes Moore, G, 6-3/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 79.1 FT%, 42.3 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 2.0 spg, 34.1 mpg); David Phillips, F, 6-5/Jr. (12.5 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 78.4 FT%, 32.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Chuck Barker, G, 5-11/Sr. (6.8 ppg, 87.0 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 16.6 mpg); Francisco Colon, F, 6-8/Sr. (11.1 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 45.8 FG%, 74.1 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 27.6 mpg); Juraj Grabaric, F, 6-9/Sr. (4.5 ppg, 45.8 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 40.0 3-pt%, 11.7 mpg).

Top newcomers: Renaldo Atkins, G, 6-2/Fr.; John Cape, F, 6-8/Fr.; Rashun Coleman, G, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Clark Costa, F, 6-8/Soph. (JC); Cory Hart, F, 6-9/Soph. (JC); Oliver Morton, C, 6-10/Soph. (transfer/Mississippi); Tim Parker, G, 6-4/Fr.; Marc Smith, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); J.B. Watkins, G, 5-11/Fr.

Strengths: The addition of four transfers, along with the return of the top seven players, creates the most game-experienced squad in the league. The inside game, virtually non-existent a year ago, has been bolstered by newcomers. Idris Harper and Otis Donald are players who should thrive as sophomores.

Weaknesses: Perimeter shooting needs to improve. The lack of an inside game hampered the perimeter players last year.

Outlook: Overreliance on the perimeter game and two starting freshmen led to an uncharacteristic poor record a year ago, but the addition of a hefty, potentially powerful frontcourt should lift the Mocs back toward 20-win status.

Last league title: 1997. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997. **Site:** Chattanooga, Tenn. **Home court:** UTC Arena (11,218).

3. FURMAN

Coach: Larry Davis (9-20, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 9-20. Southern/Southern Division: 5-9/4th.

Starters lost (1): Chuck Vincent, F (17.2 ppg, 7.9 rpg, 57.5 FG%, 74.5 FT%, 1.3 spg, 33.1 mpg).

Others lost: Que Gaither, G (9.1 mpg).

Starters returning (4): Marcus Dilligard, G, 6-4/Soph. (5.8 ppg, 30.1 mpg); Andre Kerr, F, 6-6/Jr. (11.1 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 31.1 mpg); Daniel Quigley, C, 6-7/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 47.0 FG%, 25.0 mpg); Bubba Smith, G, 6-4/Sr. (10.8 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 72.9 FT%, 37.8 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 33.9 mpg).

Other returnees: P.J. Brown, G, 6-1/Soph. (12.9 mpg); Will Coles, C, 6-8/Sr. (4.8 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 65.7 FG%, 15.7 mpg); Patrick Garner, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (46.7 FG%, 11.7 mpg); Terry McGann, G, 6-0/Sr. (11.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Paul Foster, G, 6-0/Fr.; Kyle Julius, G, 6-3/Fr.; Stanislav Makshantsev, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Stevan Petrovic, C, 6-11/Fr.; Anthony Thomas, G, 6-4/Fr.

Strengths: The program gets a major boost with the arrival of five players who are expected to get extensive minutes. JC transfer Stanislav Makshantsev should add scoring punch from within 15 feet. Depth should be an asset.

Weaknesses: Four of the newcomers are freshmen. One of them, Foster, is the only true point guard on the team.

Outlook: After losing at least 17 games for six consecutive seasons, Furman appears ready to make a significant leap. Much (too much) to make a championship run depends on the progress of newcomers, but the potential for a high division finish seems to be there for the first time in years.

Last league title: 1991 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1980. **Site:** Greenville S.C. **Home court:** Timmons Arena (5,000).

4. WOFFORD

Coach: Richard Johnson (188-164, 13 years).

1997-98 record: 9-18. Southern/Southern Division: 6-8/T2nd.

Starters lost (1): McCarthy Crenshaw, C (3.7 rpg, 14.0 mpg).
Others lost: Reggie DeGray, F (4.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 46.1 FG%; transfer/SW Louisiana); Natter Miller, G (4.5 ppg).

Starters returning (4): Ian Chadwick, G, 6-3/Soph. (12.0 ppg, 28.0 mpg); Donald Davis, G, 6-0/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 75.6 FT%, 1.1 spg, 23.0 mpg); Alfred Forbes, F, 6-4/Sr. (11.8 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 1.3 spg, 29.0 mpg); Starzee Walker, G, 6-3/Jr. (5.7 ppg, 82.6 FT%, 19.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Brandon Boyce, C, 7-0/Soph.; Rashane DeLoach, C, 6-7/Jr. (54.2 FG%, 11.0 mpg); Jon Pryor, G, 6-0/Soph. (16.0 mpg); Bishop Ravenal, F, 6-7/Soph. (11.0 mpg); Terenthiel White, F, 6-4/Soph. (46.6 FG%, 14.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Colon Largent, G, 6-3/Fr.; Matt Tucker, F, 6-7/Fr. **Strengths:** Ian Chadwick is a solid perimeter scorer and go-to man, and Alfred Forbes is a game-tested veteran. Coach Richard Johnson is among the best strategists in the league.

Weaknesses: The lack of a true center hurts, as does the loss of forward Reggie DeGray, last year's fifth-leading scorer.

Outlook: The Terriers shocked the rest of the league by winning three of their last four games to finish 6-8 in their inaugural Southern season. With virtually all the key figures except DeGray back, and first-time entrance into the league tournament as an incentive, a .500 conference mark is within reach.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Spartanburg, S.C. **Home court:** Johnson Arena (3,500).

5. GA. SOUTHERN

Coach: Gregg Polinsky (23-59, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 10-18. Southern/Southern Division: 4-10/5th.

Starters lost (1): Quincy Wright, F (10.2 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 1.5 spg, 22.9 mpg; transferred).
Others lost: Elvardo Rolle, G (10.5 ppg, 43.3 3-pt%, 26.0 mpg); Arkee Thompson, G (6.3 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 1.3 spg, 22.0 mpg; focusing on football).

Starters returning (4): Fernando Daniel, G, 6-1/Soph. (7.5 ppg, 78.0 FT%, 35.5 3-pt%, 3.8 apg, 32.7 mpg); Hamp Jones, F, 6-7/Jr. (7.8 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 58.3 FG%, 2.0 spg, 25.9 mpg); Quentin Martin, G, 6-4/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 1.2 spg, 29.4 mpg); Cedric McGinnis, F, 6-8/Sr. (12.8 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 46.9 FG%, 71.8 FT%, 1.5 spg, 31.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Duane Goebel, G, 6-4/Sr. (3.5 rpg, 19.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Toby Frazier, G, 6-2/Soph. (Prop 48); Donta Humphries, G, 6-0/Fr.; Robert Hutchinson, G, 6-1/Fr.; Edward Keith, F, 6-7/Fr.; Kashien Latham, F, 6-9/Fr.; DeMarlo Slocum, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Forward Cedric McGinnis is an excellent scorer from within 20 feet, and Fernando Daniel is a three-year starter at guard.

Weaknesses: Point guard, the most glaring problem a year ago, gets help in the form of freshmen Donta Humphries and Robert Hutchinson. With some help inside, McGinnis would get much better scoring and rebounding opportunities.

Outlook: The Eagles have the potential to improve if they get quality up-tempo play from the point. Unless a scoring threat emerges to complement McGinnis, defenses again will find a way to neutralize his talent.

Last league title: 1992 (TAAC). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1992. **Site:** Statesboro, Ga. **Home court:** Hanner Fieldhouse (4,327).

6. THE CITADEL

Coach: Pat Dennis (70-92, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 15-13. Southern/Southern Division: 6-8/T2nd.

Starters lost (2): Jamie Jenkins, G (14.1 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 81.4 FT%, 32.0 mpg); Matt Newman, C (10.4 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 75.2 FT%, 22.4 mpg).

Others lost: Julian London, G; Panu Majala, F; Kirill Misyuchenko, C (6.5 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 2.5 bpg, 20.1 mpg); Virgil Stevens, F (13.3 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 35.3 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 26.9 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Jerald Freeman, F (3.1 rpg, 71.9 FT%, 26.1 mpg); Bryan Patton, G (4.7 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 78.6 FT%, 3.7 apg, 27.4 mpg); Ryan Sears, F (6.4 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 22.9 mpg).

Other returnees: Jonathan Kunz, F, 6-5/Sr.; Johan Rat, G, 6-2/Jr.; Mike Roy, G, 5-10/Soph. (4.2 ppg, 16.9 mpg); Tim Wilson, F, 6-8/Soph.

Top newcomers: Travis Cantrell, G, 6-3/Fr.; Trevor Crafton, G, 6-2/Fr.; Kevin Longley, F, 6-7/Fr.; Alan Puckett, F, 6-4/Fr.; Rod Shiver, F, 6-6/Fr.; Cliff Washburn, F, 6-6/Fr.

Strengths: Ryan Sears and Jerald Freeman are experienced, and Bryan Patton and Mike Roy form a capable duo at the point. Travis Cantrell and Trevor Crafton arrive with good credentials.

Weaknesses: The go-to guys of the past three years are gone, and game-deciding reinforcements are a season away. The Bulldogs must rely on too many freshmen.

Outlook: Losing Jamie Jenkins, Matt Newman and Kirill Misyuchenko at the same time was a huge blow. Combined with the early departure of forward Virgil Stevens, an All-Southern talent, it leaves the Bulldogs with a massive rebuilding project that will take at least a year.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Charleston, S.C. **Home court:** McAlister Field House (6,000).

TSN

BY THOMAS MURPHY
Mobile (Ala.) Register

1. ARKANSAS STATE

Coach: Dickey Nutt (44-39, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 20-9. Sun Belt: 14-4/T1st.

Starters lost (2): Micah Marsh, G (15.1 ppg, 80.6 FT%, 40.9 3-pt%, 3.4 apg, 1.1 spg, 35.8 mpg); Jabari Myles, F (13.2 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 52.1 FG%, 70.4 FT%, 33.0 mpg).

Others lost: James Pigram, F/C (quit team).

Starters returning (3): Eric Beatty, F/C, 6-8/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 22.6 mpg); Chico Fletcher, G, 5-7/Jr. (13.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 37.2 3-pt%, 8.3 apg, 1.9 spg, 36.7 mpg); Antonio Harvey, G, 6-4/Sr. (14.4 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 46.6 FG%, 72.6 FT%, 43.6 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 34.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Jermaine Ezell, G/F, 6-3/Sr.; Freddy Hicks, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.6 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 56.0 FG%, 2.4 bpg, 23.5 mpg); Jeff Holloway, G, 6-3/Sr. (72.4 FT%, 9.5 mpg); Wes Wagner, G, 6-0/Soph.; Geoff Williams, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (RS/knee).

Top newcomers: DeShawn Denson, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Cody Mears, G, 6-3/Fr. (RS/experience); C.J. Pepper, F/G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Luis Rivas, F, 6-7/Fr.; Norman Stewart, G, 6-2/Fr.

Strengths: The Indians have perhaps the best nucleus of returning players in the league in Chico Fletcher, Antonio Harvey, Freddy Hicks and Eric Beatty. Fletcher had a breakout season in 1997, ranking second in the nation in assists (8.3) and becoming the first sophomore to earn the conference's player of the year award since 1983. Harvey, a former walk-on, is a strong 3-point shooter (43.6 percent), rebounder and defender, and he led the team in scoring. Swingman C.J. Pepper, a JC transfer, comes with solid credentials and should play a major role. This also is a good 3-point shooting team (39.7 percent).

Weaknesses: ASU will miss the veteran leadership of Micah Marsh and Jabari Myles. The team's rebounding needs to improve: The Indians ranked ninth in the conference in rebounding differential at minus-3.3 per game. The team still lacks size; the tallest player is 6-9. The Indians also must have a better stretch run after losing their final three games of the 1997-98 season, including an early exit from the Sun Belt Tournament.

Outlook: There's no reason the Indians can't win the conference and qualify for the NCAA Tournament for the first time. Coach Dickey Nutt—whose brother, Houston, is the football coach at Arkansas—has the program in great shape and the fans are the league's most devoted. But to make the NAAs, the Indians must clear a mental hurdle. Last year they needed just one win in their final two regular-season games to clinch the conference championship, but they lost to Louisiana Tech and Southwestern Louisiana and had to share the title with South Alabama.

Last league title: 1998.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Jonesboro, Ark. **Home court:** Convocation Center (10,563).

2. FLA. INTERNATIONAL

Coach: Marcos "Shakey" Rodriguez (50-36, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 21-8. TAAC East: 13-3/2nd.

Starters lost: None.

Others lost: Quincey Gamble, F (5.0 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 52.8 FG%, 1.4 spg, 18.6 mpg); Sam Watts, G.

Starters returning (5): Carlos Arroyo, G, 6-2/Soph. (12.0 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 37.3 3-pt%, 4.7 apg, 2.3 spg, 26.7 mpg); Raja Bell, F, 6-5/Sr. (16.6 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 76.7 FT%, 1.2 spg, 29.5 mpg); Darius Cook, C, 6-9/Jr. (10.9 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 55.7 FG%, 22.9 mpg); Anthony Harris, F, 6-9/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 59.6 FG%, 74.4 FT%, 13.6 mpg); Damien McKnight, G, 6-2/Sr. (8.5 ppg, 71.1 FT%, 39.5 3-pt%, 21.0 mpg).

Other returnees: Ramon Aybar, F, 6-9/Jr.; Marcus Carreno, G, 5-11/Sr. (5.0 ppg, 85.7 FT%, 40.4 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 17.2 mpg); Joe Cross, G, 6-0/Jr.; Gene Derkack, F, 6-6/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 18.7 mpg); Karel Rosario, C/F, 6-9/Soph. (4.8 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 53.8 FG%, 9.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: None.

Strengths: All the starters and 10 lettermen return from last season's team, which posted the best record in the program's 17-year history and lost in the finals of the TAAC tourney. Darius Cook instantly

becomes one of the largest and strongest players in the league. FIU's 580 turnovers caused, 11.2 steals per game and plus-5.4 turnover margin would have led the Sun Belt last season. Coach Marcos "Shakey" Rodriguez liberally distributes playing time. And as a new member of the conference, FIU could bring an element of surprise.

Weaknesses: FIU allowed foes to shoot 47.2 percent from the field last year, which would have ranked second-to-last in this conference. The Golden Panthers are not a particularly strong rebounding team. The downside to being a new member is that FIU might need time to adjust to the league's style of play and unfamiliar arenas.

Outlook: Rodriguez has the most experienced team in the league. The Golden Panthers had been drilling most of the weaker teams in the TAAC, but they'll find the Sun Belt deeper with quality teams. But with an experienced lineup in place, don't be surprised if FIU crashes the party and takes home the conference title in its first attempt.

Last league title: 1995 (TAAC East).

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Miami. **Home court:** Golden Panther Arena (5,000).

3. LOUISIANA TECH

Coach: Keith Richard (first year).

1997-98 record: 12-15. Sun Belt: 9-9/T5th.

Starters lost (2): Marlon Chambers, C/F (6.0 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.0 spg, 24.7 mpg); Courtney Hargraves, G (5.1 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 1.4 spg, 23.2 mpg).

Others lost: Jacques Collins, F (6.1 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 56.6 FG%, 16.5 mpg); Jabari Johnson, G (10.3 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Lonnie Cooper, G, 6-5/Sr. (17.0 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 80.3 FT%, 38.4 3-pt%, 5.1 apg, 1.5 spg, 35.8 mpg); Omar Cooper, G, 6-4/Jr. (11.9 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 64.5 FG%, 30.0 mpg); Derek Smith, G, 6-2/Jr. (14.9 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 47.7 FG%, 72.5 FT%, 37.0 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 31.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Jon Fowler, C, 6-10/Soph.; Walker McDonald, F, 6-6/Jr.; Fred Smith, F, 6-6/Jr. (3.8 rpg, 50.9 FG%, 20.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Gerrod Henderson, G, 6-4/Soph. (Prop 48); Craig Jackson, G, 6-1/Jr. (JC); Ira Miller, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Mike Pawelczak, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Kendrick Spruel, F, 6-9/Jr. (transfer/Florida); Curtis Williams, F/C, 6-9/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: Lonnie Cooper has the talent to win conference player of the year honors. He scores, rebounds and creates plays, and should be the most explosive player in the league. Derek Smith has the jumping ability to produce inside despite his size, and he's a good shooter. Omar Cooper might be the most underrated player in the league. Newcomers Gerrod Henderson, Kendrick Spruel and Craig Jackson—who originally signed with UALR before saying his letter of intent was hand-delivered by a booster—are expected to produce immediately.

Weaknesses: Team unity and leadership must grow for Tech to contend. The Bulldogs must defend the 3-point arc better. Concentration lapsed at times last season. Tech also does not enjoy an overwhelming home-court advantage. And in late August, coach Jim Wooldridge resigned to become an assistant to Tim Floyd with the Chicago Bulls.

Outlook: Tech's nine-year run of 20-win seasons and postseason berths, which ended in 1992, seems like a distant memory. With the two Coopers, Smith and the gifted newcomers on campus, the elements are in place to produce a winner.

Last league title: 1992 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1991.

Site: Ruston, La. **Home court:** Thomas Assembly Center (8,000).

4. SW LOUISIANA

Coach: Jessie Evans (18-13, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 18-13. Sun Belt: 12-6/3rd.

Starters lost (4): Tyrone Foster, G (16.0 ppg, 45.0 FG%, 80.3 FT%, 4.2 apg, 1.2 spg, 29.9 mpg); Casey Green, G (16.9 ppg, 77.6 FT%, 35.5 3-pt%, 1.9 spg, 26.5 mpg); Chris Manuel, F (12.1 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 49.3

PREDICTIONS

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Arkansas State | 5. South Alabama |
| 2. Fla. International | 6. Ark.-Little Rock |
| 3. Louisiana Tech | 7. W. Kentucky |
| 4. SW Louisiana | 8. New Orleans |

ALL-SUN BELT

FIRST TEAM

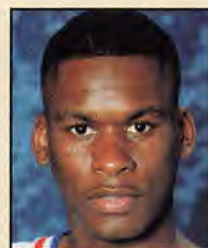
Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F/C	DARRIAN EVANS, South Alabama	6-5/203	Sr.
F	RYAN MOSS, Arkansas-Little Rock	6-7/215	Sr.
F	REGINALD POOLE, SW Louisiana	6-8/210	Sr.
G	LONNIE COOPER, Louisiana Tech	6-5/186	Sr.
G	CHICO FLETCHER, Arkansas State	5-7/170	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Name, school	Ht./Wt.	Class
F	RAJA BELL, Florida International	6-5/208	Sr.
F/C	RAVON FARRIS, Western Kentucky	6-8/215	Sr.
F/G	C.J. PEPPER, Arkansas State	6-4/225	Jr.
G	CHRIS GREEN, Arkansas-Little Rock	5-10/150	Sr.
G	DEREK SMITH, Louisiana Tech	6-2/189	Jr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

LONNIE COOPER, G, Louisiana Tech



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

C.J. PEPPER, F/G, Arkansas State

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Antonio Harvey, Arkansas State.

Best rebounder: Ryan Moss, Arkansas-Little Rock.

Best playmaker: Chico Fletcher, Arkansas State.

Best defender: Freddy Hicks, Arkansas State.

Best leaper: Derek Smith, Louisiana Tech.

Most versatile: Raja Bell, Florida International.

Most flamboyant: Chris Green, Arkansas-Little Rock.

Best NBA prospect: Lonnie Cooper, Louisiana Tech.



FG%, 77.8 FT%, 1.4 spg, 28.5 mpg); Chris Snowden, G (7.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 90.7 FT%, 22.5 mpg).

Others lost: Shannon Bennett, F (12.8 mpg; left school).

Starters returning (1): Brett Smith, C, 6-9/Soph. (6.5 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 1.0 spg, 24.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Chris Funderburk, G, 6-2/Soph. (9.0 mpg); William Howell, G, 6-4/Soph. (13.2 mpg); David Patrick G, 5-10/Jr. (13.8 mpg); Reginald Poole, F, 6-8/Sr. (RS/leg); Kendall Regis, C, 6-9/Jr. (5.6 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 54.5 FG%, 18.6 mpg); Derrick Warren, F, 6-7/Jr.; Shea Whiting, F, 6-6/Soph. (5.0 ppg, 15.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Orlando Butler, G, 6-2/Soph. (Prop 48); Lester Bruno, C, 6-8/Soph. (JC); Blaine Harmon, G, 6-3/Soph. (Prop 48); Anthony Johnson, F, 6-6/Fr.; Billy Jones, G, 6-5/Soph. (transfer/Pepperdine); Robert Jupiter, G, 6-4/Fr.; Lonnie Thomas, F, 6-8/Soph. (JC).

Strengths: The return of Reggie Poole, if he fully recovers from surgery to remove a benign bone tumor in his left leg, would make the Cajuns instant contenders. Poole provides leadership and a solid scoring, rebounding and defensive presence in the middle. Twin mountains Kendall Regis and Brett Smith give USL the sturdiest frontcourt in the conference. If Anthony Johnson qualifies academically, he should be a runaway winner of freshman of the year honors. Jessie Evans has plugged into a demonstrative fan base that has been starving for a visible, socially conscious coach for the past decade.

Weaknesses: The top four scorers from last season's team are gone. Evans must blend in a hefty number of newcomers (seven) with the veterans. The battles for playing time will be intense. The Cajuns shot 4.2 percent worse than their opponents last season and were an average rebounding team.

Outlook: The Cajundome should offer a spicy menu of difficulties for visitors this season with the vocal fans coming back in force. If Evans gets his playing time and chemistry issues resolved, the Cajuns will vie for the championship. Even if USL doesn't win the regular-season conference title, the Cajuns could win the league's NCAA bid because the Sun Belt Tournament will be in Lafayette.

Last league title: 1994.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Lafayette, La. **Home court:** Cajundome (12,800).

5. SOUTH ALABAMA

Coach: Bob Weltlich (21-7, 1 year; 240-277 overall, 18 years; 0-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 21-7. Sun Belt: 14-4/T1st. Lost to Illinois in NCAA West first round.

Starters lost (4): Rico Alderson, F (14.4 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 56.5 FG%, 1.0 spg, 1.1 bpg, 32.0 mpg); Jerome Coaxum, G/F (7.7 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 71.2 FT%, 3.0 apg, 28.5 mpg); Jason Hamm, F/C (6.2 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 31.5 mpg); Toby Madison, G (15.0 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 79.1 FT%, 47.9 3-pt%, 34.0 mpg).

Others lost: Rusty Yoder, G (missed most of last season with shoulder injury and opted not to return).

Starters returning (1): Darrin Evans, F/C, 6-5/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 62.3 FG%, 2.2 spg, 31.5 mpg).

Other returnees: Dusty Dubbs, F/G, 6-4/Jr. (81.5 FT%, 17.0 mpg); Clayton Dye, F/G, 6-4/Sr. (48.9 FG%, 9.6 mpg).

Top newcomers: Brian Bland, C, 6-8/Soph. (JC); James Broussard, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Melvin Cochran, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Josh Hotz, G, 6-4/Jr. (transfer/SW Missouri State); Jerrick Kellum, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Jason Maronge, C, 6-10/Jr. (JC); Alvin Payton, F, 6-4/Fr.; Virgil Stanescu, F/C, 6-10/Soph. (club team, Romania); Michael Stewart, F, 6-6/Jr. (JC); Tom Titus, G, 6-0/Fr. (transfer/Youngstown State); Bruce Williams, C/F, 6-6/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: USA has been the conference's best club the past two seasons and have had back-to-back NCAA Tournament appearances. The Jaguars ranked second nationally in scoring defense (54.5 ppg), 23rd in scoring margin (10.5 ppg) and ninth in rebounding margin (7.6 rpg) last season. Darrin Evans, the lone returning starter, should be one of the conference's toughest inside players.

Weaknesses: Ninety percent of the team's scoring and 70 percent of its rebounding are gone. The Jaguars are fast developing a reputation for leaning on JC talent, which makes continuity and developing fan interest an uphill battle. Among the 11 newcomers this year, six come from the JC ranks and two are transferring from other colleges. Despite defending their conference crown with another co-championship last season, the Jaguars ranked seventh in attendance in the league.

Outlook: With the massive roster overhaul, fans will come

closer to finding out if Bob Weltlich is more like the coach with the league's best all-time winning percentage (.777) or the man with a career record of 240-277 (.462). A good sign: A new arena opens in December.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Mobile, Ala. **Home court:** Mitchell Center (10,000).

6. ARK.-LITTLE ROCK

Coach: Wimp Sanderson (73-43, 4 years; 338-161 overall, 16 years; 12-10 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-13. Sun Belt: 10-8/4th.

Starters lost (2): James Price, G (7.8 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 4.4 apg, 1.1 spg, 28.9 mpg); Danial Robinson, F (5.6 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 21.0 mpg).

Others lost: Sherman Lusk, G (9.1 ppg, 36.7 3-pt%, 21.1 mpg).

Starters returning (3): Maurice Bowie, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.1 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 50.7 FG%, 22.0 mpg); Chris Green, G, 5-10/Sr. (15.2 ppg, 74.4 FT%, 3.7 apg, 35.5 mpg); Ryan Moss, F, 6-7/Sr. (14.5 ppg, 9.7 rpg, 65.0 FG%, 2.0 bpg, 34.1 mpg).

Other returnees: Tavares Davis, G, 6-6/Soph.; Tyren Johnson, F, 6-8/Jr. (RS/foot); Maurice Jones, G, 6-2/Sr.; Michael Neal, F, 6-8/Soph. (9.1 mpg); Steve Rector, G, 6-1/Sr. (5.1 ppg, 24.0 mpg).

Top newcomers: Alan Barksdale, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC); Adrian Brown, G, 6-1/Fr. (RS); Ryan Gore, F, 6-5/Jr. (transfer/Henderson, Ark., State); Michael Lovitt, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Jesse Peeples, G, 6-1/Fr.

Strengths: Ryan Moss earned newcomer of the year honors, and his 65 percent shooting broke Cedric "Cornbread" Maxwell's conference record (64 percent) and ranked second in the nation. Chris Green has a quick first step and is a solid passer, but he could improve on his field-goal shooting. The Trojans protect the ball well. They were the only club with less than 400 turnovers in the league last year. New sharpshooter Alan Barksdale shot 61.3 percent from 3-point range at Meridian (Miss.) JC last year.

Weaknesses: The Trojans must be more tenacious defenders this season after straying from coach Wimp Sanderson's trademark strangling defense last year. UALR ranked sixth in defensive field-goal percentage (44.4), eighth in 3-point field goal defense (32.9) and last in steals per game (5.4) a year ago. Subject to wild swings last season, the Trojans had a 3-6 record in conference games decided by 14 or more points. UALR must protect its home court better to contend.

Outlook: A troubling offseason—featuring the Craig Jackson fiasco (Jackson originally signed with UALR before saying his letter of intent was hand-delivered by a booster; he subsequently signed with Louisiana Tech)—has some UALR faithful grabbing Sanderson's welcome mat with both hands. Sanderson's coaching isn't in question; it's his grouching and the perception of his indifference. The ingredients are in place for the Trojans to contend if the defense improves and everybody stays on the same page. But a low finish in the conference is more likely.

Last league title: 1996.

Last NCAA appearance: 1990.

Site: Little Rock, Ark. **Home court:** Barton Coliseum (8,303).

7. WESTERN KENTUCKY

Coach: Dennis Felton (first year).

1997-98 record: 10-19. Sun Belt: 6-12/T8th.

Starters lost (2): Steven Bides, F (14.1 ppg, 6.2 rpg, 70.8 FT%, 35.8 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 31.5 mpg); Greg Springfield, C (4.4 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 45.9 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 19.3 mpg; left school).

Others lost: Monty Latimer, G (10.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 75.0 FT%, 42.5 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 1.4 spg, 28.7 mpg; left school); Maurice Strong, C (6.2 ppg, 55.9 FG%, 13.9 mpg; left school).

Starters returning (3): Vince Edwards, G, 6-1/Sr. (16.7 mpg); Ravon Farris, C/F, 6-8/Sr. (10.6 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 50.9 FG%, 29.2 mpg); Joe Harney, G, 6-4/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 73.5 FT%, 36.3 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 26.8 mpg).

Other returnees: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, F, 6-5/Sr.; Melvin Adams, F, 6-6/Sr. (4.8 ppg); Rashon Brown, G, 6-0/Soph. (5.2 ppg, 3.3 apg, 1.2 spg, 20.7 mpg); Kyle Chapman, G, 6-5/Sr. (10.7 mpg); Lee Lampley, F, 6-6/Jr. (14.1 mpg); Nashon McPherson, G, 6-4/Soph. (6.5 ppg, 1.2 spg, 17.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Ben Mauck, F, 6-8/Fr.; Tremain Rowles,

G, 6-5/Fr.; Casey Simpson, G, 6-3/Fr.; Bennie Stewart, G, 6-3/Fr.

Strengths: This is a senior-laden club that should not have the burden of great expectations outside of its own. New coach Dennis Felton comes with solid credentials from Clemson, where he was an assistant. Ravon Farris rebounded from knee problems early last season and seems poised to become one of the league's best big men. Joe Harney can be a deadly outside shooter when he's on. Freshman guard Bennie Stewart has a troubled past, but he has the talent to be one of the best guards the conference has seen.

Weaknesses: The team must identify a playmaker quickly; the backcourt starters down the stretch, Nashon McPherson and Harney, combined for 1.3 assists per game. Western must become more muscular after being out rebounded by 1.8 rebounds per game. The Hilltoppers didn't take advantage of Diddle Arena—one of the toughest venues in the country—last season, posting a 4-5 record against conference foes there.

Outlook: This team revolted in midseason under Matt Kilcullen, so establishing team unity is a must for Felton. Ten players started at least six games last year. One reason for that was injuries, but it also pointed out the team's lack of direction. The chemistry must improve for this team to avoid last place.

Last league title: 1995.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Bowling Green, Ky. **Home court:** Diddle Arena (11,300).

8. NEW ORLEANS

Coach: Joey Stiebing (15-12, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 15-12. Sun Belt: 9-9/T5th.

Starters lost (4): Corey Brown, G (13.9 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 72.3 FT%, 36.8 3-pt%, 3.2 apg, 1.4 spg, 32.1 mpg); Eddie Washington, C (12.0 ppg, 8.3 rpg, 48.9 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 42.1 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 1.2 bpg, 31.1 mpg); DeWaune Wesley, F (17.8 ppg, 8.4 rpg, 54.0 FG%, 1.1 spg, 33.8 mpg); Edderick Womack, G (79.1 FT%, 3.8 apg, 1.1 spg, 25.9 mpg; transfer).

Others lost: Reggie Carter, G (transfer); Kevin Elliott, F (9.1 mpg; transfer); Marcus Murray, F (transfer); Kris Stoneking, G (72.2 FT%, 1.0 spg, 18.7 mpg; transfer).

Starters returning (1): Tory Walker, F, 6-7/Soph. (9.0 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 71.4 FT%, 43.6 3-pt%, 1.0 bpg, 23.7 mpg).

Other returnees: Carlos Hines, F, 6-6/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 17.4 mpg).

Top newcomers: Desmond Baxter, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Tim Brinker, G, 6-3/Soph. (JC); Frank Clardy, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Robert Griffin, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC); Kevin Pickings, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Rhett Reed, F, 6-8/Fr.; Markell Sneed, G, 6-2/Sr. (transfer/Duquesne; eligible after first semester); Byron Wilson, F, 6-9/Jr. (JC); Curtis Wilson, F, 6-7/Jr. (JC); Dexter Young, G, 6-0/Jr. (JC).

Strengths: The Privateers are set at small forward, if nothing else. Returning Sun Belt freshman of the year Tory Walker and Carlos Hines ranked fourth and fifth in scoring on the team last season. Coach Joey Stiebing stressed defense in his first season, and the Privateers ranked second in field-goal defense (41.8 percent) and tied for third in scoring defense (67.1 ppg). UNO was good from the line (68.4 percent) last season.

Weaknesses: Walker and Hines are the only returning players on a team with a staggering 10 newcomers. The Privateers open the season with six consecutive road games, not the optimum conditions for a team made up of players without Division I experience. Lakefront Arena, with a capacity of 10,000 and an average attendance of less than 2,000 per game, might afford the weakest home-court advantage in the league. UNO has just 12 home games this season, its lowest total in 19 years.

Outlook: Stiebing declared when he took the job before last season that he wanted to build with freshmen and shake the school's image as a JC haven. But after one year on that plan, the Privateers signed a class with eight junior college players—and one freshman.

Because of the risks in blending 10 newcomers into a returning nucleus of two players, UNO is a long shot to contend this season.

Last league title: 1997 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: New Orleans. **Home court:** Lakefront Arena (10,000).

TSN

1. NORTHERN ARIZONA

Coach: Ben Howland (58-51, 4 years).
1997-98 record: 21-8. Big Sky: 13-3/1st. Lost to Cincinnati in NCAA West first round.
Key players: Kawika Akina, G, 5-10/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 47.3 FG%, 77.8 FT%, 46.4 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 23.8 mpg); Casey Frank, C, 6-9/Sr. (10.7 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 62.0 FG%, 1.0 bpg, 21.6 mpg); Ross Land, G, 6-5/Jr. (10.7 ppg, 2.3 rpg, 79.1 FT%, 43.8 3-pt%, 28.3 mpg); Dan McClintock, C, 7-0/Jr. (9.6 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 62.9 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 16.0 mpg).
Outlook: The Lumberjacks return a balanced, deep cast that could hang a third consecutive title banner. They don't have much star power, but the team consists of players who excel in their roles. The backcourt is outstanding, and the center position of Casey Frank and Dan McClintock provides scoring and rebounding. NAU led I-A schools in 3-point percentage for the second consecutive season (43.0 percent) and was the only team in the top 20 in 3-point, field-goal and free-throw percentages. The questions are whether a suitable replacement can be found for forward Andrew Mavis, the conference player of the year last season, and whether the Lumberjacks can outlast a handful of legitimate challengers.
Last league title: 1998. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1998.
Site: Flagstaff, Ariz. **Home court:** Walkup Skydome (7,000).

2. MONTANA STATE

Coach: Mick Durham (113-116, 6 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 19-11. Big Sky: 9-7/5th.
Key players: Mike Henry, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (5.8 ppg, 1.0 spg, 15.9 mpg); Nate Holmstadt, C, 6-8/Sr. (16.9 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 60.3 FG%, 82.3 FT%, 28.0 mpg); Jamie Hooper, G, 6-1/Soph. (5.7 ppg, 4.3 apg, 37.9 3-pt%, 24.2 mpg); Danny Sprinkle, G, 6-2/Sr. (13.5 ppg, 2.0 rpg, 35.0 3-pt%, 89.0 FT%, 29.4 mpg).
Outlook: The veteran Bobcats will be led by Nate Holmstadt, a dominating center in a league in which quality big men are scarce. Holmstadt's scoring and rebounding numbers dropped from the previous year, but his shooting percentages improved, reflecting his ability to handle increased defensive attention. Holmstadt shouldn't have to force much offensively this season because of a serviceable supporting cast led by sharp-shooting guard Danny Sprinkle. Point guard Jamie Hooper is a heady playmaker. The key to Montana State's chances is the development of help for Holmstadt.
Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.
Site: Bozeman, Mont. **Home court:** Worthington Arena (7,998).

3. PORTLAND STATE

Coach: To be announced.
1997-98 record: 15-12. Big Sky: 10-6/T3rd.
Key players: Jason Hartman, F, 6-7/Sr. (19.1 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 43.0 3-pt%, 82.2 FT%, 1.3 spg, 32.5 mpg); Derek Nesland, G, 6-6/Jr. (6.6 ppg, 2.8 rpg, 81.7 FT%, 3.5 apg, 1.0 spg, 29.9 mpg); Brian Towne, G, 6-3/Sr. (15.6 ppg, 2.7 rpg, 75.3 FT%, 42.6 3-pt%, 1.1 spg, 31.5 mpg).
Outlook: Another championship hopeful with great perimeter shooting and talented veterans. Jason Hartman, the conference newcomer of the year last season after transferring from Washington, was granted a sixth year of eligibility, recouping a season at UW in which he played in one exhibition. Hartman is a perimeter threat, along with guard Brian Towne. PSU's problems are on the interior. PSU is in only its third season since the program was revived. Coach Ritchie McKay left in mid-August to take over at Colorado State. Former NBA coach Rick Adelman was the rumored replacement.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Portland. **Home courts:** The Rose Garden (21,538); Memorial Coliseum (12,888); Stott Center (1,775).

4. WEBER STATE

Coach: Ron Abegglen (127-75, 7 years; 236-120 overall, 12 years; 1-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 14-13. Big Sky: 12-4/2nd.
Key players: Damien Baskerville, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (15.2 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 48.4 FG%, 79.5 FT%, 2.1 spg, 30.8 mpg); Andy Jensen, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.2 ppg, 7.2 rpg, 52.1 FG%, 28.3

mpg); Eric Ketcham, F, 6-9/Sr. (6.2 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 54.0 FG%, 81.6 FT%, 39.5 3-pt%, 22.3 mpg).
Outlook: The Wildcats finished a surprising second last season and could move up this season if newcomers pan out. Four JC transfers add athleticism, size and scoring. Eddie Gill should step in at point guard, and 6-10 Darius Beard will alter the skyline in Ogden. The Wildcats have three prominent returning players, led by versatile swingman Damien Baskerville. His responsibilities might be alleviated by the JC additions, which should make the Wildcats even more dangerous. If the talent meshes, Weber State could take over the top rung.
Last league title: 1995. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1995.
Site: Ogden, Utah. **Home court:** Dee Events (12,000).

5. CS NORTHRIDGE

Coach: Bobby Braswell (26-31, 2 years).
1997-98 record: 12-16. Big Sky: 7-9/7th.
Key players: Rico Harris, F, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Carl Holmes, G, 6-1/Soph. (11.0 ppg, 36.6 3-pt%, 23.2 mpg); Greg Minor, G, 6-3/Jr. (12.2 ppg, 41.5 3-pt%, 77.1 FT%, 26.3 mpg); Jeff Parris, F, 6-5/Jr. (7.6 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 62.9 FG%, 19.0 mpg).
Outlook: This team is an athletic, high-scoring bunch sidetracked a year ago by injuries, defections and academic suspensions. The Matadors have a nice group of returnees, led by Big Sky freshman of the year Carl Holmes and backcourt mate Greg Minor. The frontcourt is suspect. The addition of three JC transfers—including highly regarded Rico Harris—should help. Harris, while talented, has some baggage, though.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Northridge, Calif. **Home court:** The Matadome (3,000).

6. EASTERN WASHINGTON

Coach: Steve Aggers (26-53, 3 years; 214-193 overall, 14 years).
1997-98 record: 16-11. Big Sky: 10-6/T3rd.
Key players: Jason Humbert, C, 6-10/Jr. (5.3 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 16.0 mpg); Shannon Taylor, G, 6-3/Sr. (14.9 ppg, 40.6 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 26.0 mpg); Deon Williams, G, 6-2/Jr. (12.3 ppg, 37.5 3-pt%, 6.3 apg, 1.3 spg, 32.9 mpg).
Outlook: The Eagles have one of the best returning backcourts in the conference. Deon Williams led the Big Sky in assists, and Shannon Taylor was in the top 10 in several offensive categories. The loss of forward Karim Scott—and his 17.4 points per game—will be difficult to overcome. The answer might be Will Levy, a 6-8 JC transfer. After a string of fruitless seasons, the Eagles will see if they can enjoy consecutive years among the Big Sky elite. Recruits and frontcourt players must come through for that to occur.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Cheney, Wash. **Home court:** Reese Court (6,000).

7. MONTANA

Coach: Dan Holst (interim; first year).
1997-98 record: 16-14. Big Sky: 9-7/5th.
Key players: Jared Buckmaster, F, 6-8/Soph. (7.2 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 87.1 FT%); Bob Olson, C, 6-10/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 75.8 FT%, 25.7 mpg); Mike Warhank, G, 6-3/Jr. (8.7 ppg, 3.0 rpg, 56.1 FG%, 49.5 3-pt%, 19.2 mpg).
Outlook: Montana is the most difficult team to read in the conference. How will this team be impacted by playing at a high school gym while UM fieldhouse is being renovated? How effective will interim coach Don Holst be? Can four JC players mesh in their first season together? On top of all that, star guard J.R. Camel isn't eligible this season because of academic problems. Four JC transfers probably will determine UM's fate; the quartet should provide much-needed athleticism and depth.
Last league title: 1995. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997.
Site: Missoula, Mont. **Home court:** Sentinel High gym (3,000).

8. SACRAMENTO STATE

Coach: Tom Abatemarco (1-25, 1 year; 60-76 overall, 5 years).
1997-98 record: 1-25. Big Sky: 0-16/9th.
Key players: Ryan Coleman, G, 6-2/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 5.6

BY JIM MEEHAN
 Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman-Review

ALL-BIG SKY

DAMIEN BASKERVILLE, F/G, 6-3/210, Sr., Weber State.
 JASON HARTMAN, F, 6-7/230, Sr., Portland State.
 NATE HOLMSTADT, C, 6-8/255, Sr., Montana State.
 BRIAN TOWNE, G, 6-3/185, Sr., Portland State.
 ROSS LAND, G, 6-5/195, Jr., Northern Arizona.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

NATE HOLMSTADT, C, Montana State



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

RICO HARRIS, F, CS Northridge

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Jason Hartman, Portland State.
Best rebounder: Nate Holmstadt, Montana State.
Best playmaker: Deon Williams, Eastern Washington.
Best defender: Dan McClintock, Northern Arizona.
Best leaper: Shawn Moore, Weber State.
Most versatile: Damien Baskerville, Weber State.
Most flamboyant: Rico Harris, CS Northridge.
Best pro prospect: Nate Holmstadt, Montana State.

apg, 29.3 mpg); Sedessa Fisher, G, 6-0/Jr. (13.9 ppg, 21.9 mpg); Sean Houston, C/F, 6-8/Sr. (14.4 ppg, 10.7 rpg, 47.5 FG%, 33.9 mpg).
Outlook: The Hornets have quality center Sean Houston, the only player in the conference to average a double-double last season, and steady point guard Ryan Coleman. The rest of the team is unproven. Coach Tom Abatemarco's nine-man recruiting class was ranked 43rd-best in the nation by one publication, stoking hopes the Hornets should be significantly improved over last season.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Sacramento, Calif. **Home court:** Memorial Auditorium (2,603).

9. IDAHO STATE

Coach: Doug Oliver (first year).
1997-98 record: 6-20. Big Sky: 2-14/8th.
Key players: Brandon Hearvey, F, 6-7/Sr. (4.4 ppg, 15.5 mpg); Odell Stokes, C, 6-7/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 56.8 FG%, 18.7 mpg); Brandon Vaughn, G, 6-1/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 13.1 mpg).
Outlook: New coach Doug Oliver comes from Stanford, where he was an assistant, setting up a likely pent-house-to-outhouse scenario. The Cardinal played in the Final Four a year ago; the Bengals were 6-20. Oliver's rebuilding job is considerable, as ISU appears light on talent, especially with the academic losses of Johnny Mitchell, the team's leading rebounder, and Tywan Meadows, the leading scorer in the conference. The Bengals should focus on escaping the basement and building toward the future.
Last league title: 1994. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1987.
Site: Pocatello, Idaho. **Home court:** Holt Arena (12,000). **TSN**

MID-CONTINENT

1. ORAL ROBERTS

Coach: Barry Hinson (19-12, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 19-12. Mid-Continent: 12-4/2nd.

Key players: Blake Moses, C, 6-8/Sr. (6.4 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 48.8 FG%, 17.8 mpg); Eric Perry, G, 5-11/Jr. (9.1 ppg, 82.1 FT%, 35.8 3-pt%, 4.2 apg, 1.3 spg, 30.0 mpg); Derrick Taylor, F, 6-5/Jr. (13.6 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 56.3 FG%, 27.9 mpg); Chad Wilkerson, G, 6-6/Sr. (6.7 ppg, 51.1 FG%, 76.3 FT%, 41.8 3-pt%, 18.3 mpg).

Outlook: Losing conference rebounding champion Rocky Walls and top scorer Tim Gill won't make coach Barry Hinson's task easier, but nine veterans should smooth matters. Look for the Golden Eagles to battle Youngstown State for the title if foul-prone Blake Moses can stay in games and Derrick Taylor improves at the line (53.2 percent last season). Oral Roberts will be one of the league's most seasoned teams. If any help is needed, 6-9 freshman Brandon Rabel could be the man. **Last league title:** 1984 (Midwestern Collegiate).

Last NCAA appearance: 1984.

Site: Tulsa, Okla. **Home court:** Mabee Center (10,575).

2. YOUNGSTOWN STATE

Coach: Dan Peters (64-73, 5 years; 224-126 overall, 12 years).

1997-98 record: 20-9. Mid-Continent: 11-5/T3rd.

Key players: Maurice Anderson, F, 6-8/Sr. (7.2 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 23.3 mpg); David Brown, C, 6-8/Soph. (5.4 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 56.6 FG%, 1.4 bpg, 27.4 mpg); Desmond Harrison, F, 6-4/Soph. (7.1 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 46.1 FG%, 20.6 mpg); DeVon Lewis, G, 6-1/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 46.1 FG%, 3.1 apg, 28.9 mpg).

Outlook: This may be the most athletic team in school history. There also is size and experience. Eschewing the star system, the Penguins have led the league in scoring defense the last four years. Losing Anthony Hunt (14.4 ppg) and Willie Spellman (13.9) gouges a huge chunk from the offense, but David Brown plays above the rim. If Maurice Anderson, Desmond Harrison and Brown improve their free-throw shooting and Youngstown State continues to rebound well, look for this team to earn its first NCAA berth.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Youngstown, Ohio. **Home court:** Beeghly Ctr. (6,852).

3. VALPARAISO

Coach: Homer Drew (144-147, 10 years; 413-269 overall, 22 years; 2-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 23-10. Mid-Continent: 13-3/1st. Lost to Rhode Island in NCAA Midwest semifinals.

Key players: Jason Jenkins, F, 6-8/Soph. (37.8 3-pt%, 10.9 mpg); Jared Nuness, G, 5-11/Soph. (5.8 ppg, 78.7 FT%, 35.8 3-pt%, 20.4 mpg); Marko Punda, G, 6-6/Soph. (8.0 mpg); Zoran Viskovic, C, 6-11/Sr. (13.6 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 62.9 FG%, 1.5 bpg, 26.8 mpg).

Outlook: Bryce Drew and three other starters are gone, so the party is over at Valpo. Zoran Viskovic is the only returning starter from the school's Sweet 16 team. He ranked sixth nationally in field-goal percentage. Jared Nuness and Jason Jenkins are the other veterans who must blend with eight newcomers, including potential star 6-7 Lubos Barton and 6-3 Milo Stovall, 6-10 Marty Perry and 6-10 Ivan Vujic, a JC transfer.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1995.

Site: Valparaiso, Ind. **Home court:** Athletics-Recreation Center (4,500).

4. WESTERN ILLINOIS

Coach: Jim Kerwin (87-80, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 16-11. Mid-Continent: 11-5/T3rd.

Key players: Fernando Coloneze, C, 6-10/Jr. (7.3 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 13.8 mpg); Brandon Creason, G, 5-10/Sr. (11.7 ppg, 83.1 FT%, 40.3 3-pt%, 3.3 apg, 28.9 mpg); Shawn Doles, F, 6-4/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 71.7 FT%, 1.0 spg, 22.6 mpg); Bill Heisler, G, 6-2/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 45.4 FG%, 43.6 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 15.9 mpg).

Outlook: Look for the quick Leathernecks to rely heavily on the perimeter game with Bill Heisler and Brandon Creason leading the way. Rebounding will be difficult

without Tony Ackerman and Ryan Johnston unless Fernando Coloneze picks up the slack. Shawn Doles, who made the all-newcomer team, and Creason give coach Jim Kerwin proven scorers. You can depend on this underrated coach to maximize their talents. Seldom blessed with a superstar, Kerwin, who welcomes six JC transfers, usually keeps the Leathernecks in the title chase.

Last league title: 1983. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Macomb, Ill. **Home court:** Western Hall (5,128).

5. MO.-KANSAS CITY

Coach: Bob Sundvold (19-35, 2 years; 101-73 overall, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 9-18. Mid-Continent: 7-9/6th.

Key players: Sherod Dent, F, 6-5/Jr. (9.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 51.5 FG%, 21.0 mpg); Jimmy Keller, C, 6-6/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 56.8 FG%, 29.0 mpg); Nick Richmond, G, 6-2/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 70.2 FT%, 1.2 spg, 22.9 mpg); Jack Savage, G, 6-4/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 54.2 FG%, 22.7 mpg); Eddie Smith, G, 6-0/Sr. (9.4 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 25.4 mpg).

Outlook: The Kangaroos are experienced, thanks to six seniors. There also is good speed and depth at guard. But size is at a premium, and the team must improve on its 63.1 percent free-throw shooting. The Kangaroos also need to shoot more consistently from the outside. Look for Jimmy Keller, UMKC's only double-figure scorer, and Sherod Dent to supply leadership. Will Palmer, a 6-7 freshman, could help.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Kansas City, Mo. **Home court:** Municipal Auditorium (9,827).

6. SOUTHERN UTAH

Coach: Bill Evans (84-87, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 7-20. Mid-Continent: 4-12/7th.

Key players: Kenyatta Clyde, F/C, 6-8/Sr. (14.4 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.7 bpg, 30.1 mpg); Tyrone Ellis, G, 6-1/Sr. (5.3 ppg, 78.8 FT%, 1.4 spg, 28.2 mpg); Tarvish Felton, F, 6-5/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 46.5 FG%, 1.8 spg, 29.4 mpg); Jeff Monaco, G, 6-0/Soph. (9.9 ppg, 85.3 FT%, 27.8 mpg).

Outlook: This crew has experience, as more than 80 percent of the minutes and 79 percent of the starts are back. Kenyatta Clyde, the Mid-Con Newcomer of the Year, is a rising star with shot-blocking skills. Tarvish Felton is a two-year starter who paced the league in rebounding. While the Thunderbirds have an athletic front line, it doesn't figure to be physical. In addition, the guards are smallish and the 3-point shooting needs to improve. Two JC transfers should help in the frontcourt.

Last league title: 1995 (America West).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Cedar City, Utah. **Home court:** Centrum (5,300).

7. CHICAGO STATE

Coach: Bo Ellis (first year).

1997-98 record: 2-25. Mid-Continent: 2-14/9th.

Key players: Jason Daniel, G, 6-0/Sr. (8.4 ppg, 1.3 spg, 22.8 mpg); Jermaine "Squirt" Hicks, G, 5-6/Jr. (17.7 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 78.7 FT%, 36.1 3-pt%, 5.0 apg, 2.0 spg, 37.7 mpg); Pierre Shuttlesworth, F, 6-6/Sr. (8.0 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 1.4 spg, 27.2 mpg).

Outlook: New coach Bo Ellis, a former Marquette player and assistant, will be hard-pressed to pump up this doormat. Chicago State never has won more than two league games in a season and is 6-62 overall in league play. Quickness is personified by Jermaine "Squirt" Hicks, who led the league in steals, and Pierre Shuttlesworth. The Cougars also can shoot, but not from the line (61.3 percent). Inside scoring and defense will be problems unless 6-9 sophomore Federico Carlotta fires up. Illinois-Chicago transfer Jason Strojinc could help.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Chicago. **Home court:** Dickens Center (2,500).

IUPUI

Coach: Ron Hunter (72-40, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 18-9 in Division II.

Key players: Don Carlisle, F, 6-6/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 45.6 FG%, 23.0 mpg); Rodney Thomas, G, 6-2/Jr. (6.0 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 42.7 3-pt%, 13.0 mpg); Derek Williams, G, 6-3/Jr.

RANK 22

By JOHN MUTKA
Gary (Ind.) Post-Tribune

ALL-MID-CONTINENT

KENYATTA CLYDE, F/C, 6-8/215, Sr., Southern Utah.

DERRICK TAYLOR, F, 6-5/220, Jr., Oral Roberts.

ZORAN VISKOVIC, C, 6-11/270, Sr., Valparaiso.

JERMAINE "SQUIRT" HICKS, G, 5-6/155, Jr., Chicago State.

DEVON LEWIS, G, 6-1/185, Sr., Youngstown State.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

DERRICK TAYLOR, F, Oral Roberts.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

MILO STOVALL, G, Valparaiso

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Brandon Creason, Western Illinois.

Best rebounder: David Brown, Youngstown State.

Best playmaker: Eric Perry, Oral Roberts.

Best defender: Jermaine Hicks, Chicago State.

Best leaper: Kenyatta Clyde, Southern Utah.

Most versatile: Devon Lewis, Youngstown State.

Most flamboyant: Tarvish Felton, Southern Utah.

Best pro prospect: Zoran Viskovic, Valparaiso.

(4.5 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 48.5 FG%, 1.9 spg, 21.0 mpg).

Outlook: IUPUI (Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis), which is debuting at Division I, will miss Carlos Knox and Marcus Overstreet. The Jaguars' stars should be Don Carlisle and JC arrival Brian Ponder, a 6-2 guard. This is a quick team that likes to play up-tempo. Trapping man-to-man defense also is a staple. But this also is a young team that lacks an experienced center. Help is on the way from four JC transfers, four freshmen, a Drake transfer and a Prop 48. IUPUI's games will count in the league standings, but it won't be eligible for the Mid-Continent tournament.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Indianapolis, Ind. **Home court:** IUPUI Gym (2,000).

OAKLAND

Coach: Greg Kampe (252-148, 14 years).

1997-98 record: 15-12 in Division II.

Key players: Dan Champagne, F, 6-7/Soph. (17.3 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 66.7 FG%, 32.9 mpg); Steve Reynolds, G, 5-9/Soph. (7.5 ppg, 37.0 3-pt%, 3.1 apg, 23.9 mpg); Myke Thom, F, 6-5/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 78.4 FT%, 31.0 mpg).

Outlook: The Golden Grizzlies, who changed their nickname from Pioneers, are newcomers to Division I. Dan Champagne is the go-to guy on a team that returns three starters. Offensive firepower should be a strength, but Oakland will be undersized. Ballhandling also could be a problem for a team that welcomes six newcomers. In addition to a new level of play and a new nickname, there is a new \$40 million arena.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Rochester, Mich. **Home court:** Student Recreation and Athletic Center (3,000).

TSN

NORTHEAST

1. ST. FRANCIS (N.Y.)

Coach: Ron Ganulin (71-121, 7 years; 98-144 overall, 9 years).

1997-98 record: 15-12. Northeast: 10-6/3rd.

Key players: Richy Dominguez, G, 6-6/Soph. (11.4 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 49.1 FG%, 1.0 spg, 23.9 mpg); Henry LaLane, G/F, 6-7/Soph. (9.2 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 80.0 FT%, 18.0 mpg); Ray Minlend, G, 6-4/Sr. (8.8 ppg, 3.4 rpg, 1.5 spg, 22.3 mpg); Angel Santana, F, 6-7/Jr. (10.7 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 34.1 3-pt %, 77.1 FT%, 1.1 spg, 28.8 mpg).

Outlook: This team was the heavy favorite to win its first NEC title until 6-9 sophomore forward/center Roque Osorio (11.7 ppg, 6.3 rpg.) turned pro in his native Venezuela. Still, the Terriers return a potent cast headed by NEC Newcomer of the Year Richy Dominguez. More consistency from Henry LaLane, a big year from Ray Minlend (who transferred three years ago from Davidson) and capable play by new point guard Greg Nunn should be enough.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Brooklyn Heights, N.Y. **Home court:** Pope P.E. Center (1,250).

2. FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON

Coach: Tom Green (260-174, 15 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 23-7. Northeast: 13-3/2nd. Lost to Connecticut in NCAA East first round.

Key players: Balduf Olafsson, C, 6-10/Fr.; Lamont Perry, G, 6-3/Jr. (JC); Daryl Todd, F, 6-4/Sr. (9.9 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 1.1 spg, 23.7 mpg); Jonas Sinding, C, 6-10/Soph. (2.2 bpg, 13.5 mpg).

Outlook: The Knights lost all-league performers Elijah Allen and Rahshon Turner but have reloaded in a hurry. Lamont Perry visited Nebraska and Texas before choosing FDU, and Belgian freshmen twins Tom Vanderkeere (6-7) and Wim Vanderkeere (6-8) passed up pro offers at home. Jonas Sinding broke the school record for blocks in a season (63) in limited minutes. If the talent meshes, the Knights will be making another trip to the NCAA tourney.

Last league title: 1991 (tie). **Last time didn't make NCAA field:** 1997. **Site:** Teaneck, N.J. **Home court:** Rothman Center (5,000).

3. MOUNT ST. MARY'S

Coach: Jim Phelan (785-428, 44 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-15. Northeast: 8-8/5th.

Key players: Gregory Harris, G, 6-3/Jr. (15.5 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 36.5 3-pt%, 5.6 apg, 1.8 spg, 37.6 mpg); Tony Hayden, F, 6-5/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 1.2 spg, 29.1 mpg); Melvin Whitaker, C, 6-10/Fr.

Outlook: Gregory Harris should be one of the NEC's most complete players on a quick and athletic team. Melvin Whitaker is an intriguing prospect who signed with Virginia in 1995 but has been incarcerated since 1996; he committed to Mount St. Mary's in March and is expected to be released from jail some time in the fall. Jim Phelan's 785 wins are 47 shy of the combined total of the league's 10 other coaches.

Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1995. **Site:** Emmitsburg, Md. **Home court:** Knott Arena (3,196).

4. LONG ISLAND U.

Coach: Ray Martin (first year).

1997-98 record: 21-11. Northeast: 14-2/1st. Lost to Dayton in NJIT first round.

Key players: Richie Parker, F/G, 6-5/Jr. (15.9 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 50.8 FG%, 1.7 spg, 31.0 mpg); Issiah Francis, G, 6-3/Sr. (10.1 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 2.6 spg, 25.6 mpg); Virgil Smiley, F, 6-7 Jr. (JC).

Outlook: After winning 42 games the past two seasons with two-time NCAA scoring champion Charles Jones and two-time first team All-NEC forward Mike Campbell, the Blackbirds might land nearer the middle of the roost. This is now Richie Parker's team, with more than 60 percent of last season's offense gone. LIU should be a tad more post-oriented. LIU must shoot better from the line (an abysmal 55.9 percent last season).

Last league title: 1998. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997. **Site:** Brooklyn, N.Y. **Home court:** Schwartz Athletic Center (1,300).

5. WAGNER

Coach: Tim Capstraw (108-146, 9 years).

1997-98 record: 13-16. Northeast: 7-9/6th.

Key players: Frantz Pierre-Louis, C, 6-8/Sr. (13.6 ppg, 9.4 rpg, 48.4 FG%, 2.0 bpg, 27.3 mpg); Ryan Reed, F, 6-7/Sr. (8.6 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 49.2 FG%, 1.0 spg, 28.0 mpg); Bilal Rodgers, G, 5-9/Soph. (11.5 mpg).

Outlook: An unusual blend of experienced big men, led by Frantz Pierre-Louis and Ryan Reed, and young guards might make for an inconsistent season. But the Seahawks could be dangerous by tournament time. Wagner would be better if guard Mick Wheeler (10th in the nation in assists) hadn't opted to return to his native Australia. The Seahawks will be breaking in their long-awaited new arena, replacing dimly lighted Sutter Gym. **Last league title:** None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Staten Island, N.Y. **Home court:** Spiro Sports Center (2,500).

6. CENTRAL CONNECTICUT

Coach: Howie Dickenman (13-40, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 4-22. Northeast: 3-13/8th.

Key players: Corsley Edwards, C, 6-8/Soph. (Prop 48); Rick Mickens, G, 6-4/Jr. (19.8 ppg, 37.6 3-pt%, 85.1 FT%, 2.4 spg, 35.5 mpg); Dean Walker, G, 6-4/Soph. (7.7 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 72.0 FT%, 1.0 spg, 30.6 mpg).

Outlook: Injuries and the lack of a true point guard helped wreck the Blue Devils last season. Center Charron Watson was off to a good start before suffering a season-ending foot injury. JC transfers Tomas Brookins and Joe Thomas hope to solve the point guard woes. Corsley Edwards and Harvey Van Stein, who played for the Dutch National Team, should make an impact inside.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** New Britain, Conn. **Home court:** Detrick Gym (4,500).

7. MD.-BALTIMORE CO.

Coach: Tom Sullivan (24-58, 3 years; 178-183 overall, 13 years).

1997-98 record: 14-14. Big South: 6-6/3rd.

Key players: Rich Giddens, G, 6-5/Soph. (15.5 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 74.0 FT%, 39.0 3-pt%, 36.4 mpg); Kennedy Okafor, F, 6-7/Soph. (12.1 ppg, 9.3 rpg, 51.0 FG%, 74.0 FT%, 31.3 mpg); Terence Ward, G, 6-1/Soph. (12.9 ppg, 3.7 apg, 51.7 FG%, 81.0 FT%, 39.0 3-pt%, 33.4 mpg).

Outlook: UMBC was last season's surprise team in the Big South despite four freshman starters. UMBC posted its most victories since 1988-89 and split two-game series with Mount St. Mary's and Robert Morris. Ultra-quick point guard Terence Ward makes the Retrievers go, and Giddens is a natural scorer. UMBC should make an impact in its first NEC season.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Baltimore. **Home court:** UMBC Fieldhouse (4,024).

8. ROBERT MORRIS

Coach: Jim Boone (12-42, 2 years; 240-113 overall, 12 years).

1997-98 record: 8-19. Northeast: 4-12/7th.

Key players: Keith Jones, F, 6-6/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 1.1 spg, 28.3 mpg); Gene Nabors, G, 6-2/Jr. (transfer/ LSU); Niall Phelan, G, 6-3/Jr. (11.4 ppg, 78.4 FT%, 32.7 mpg).

Outlook: Jim Boone still is shuffling his roster, as eight players are donning Colonial uniforms for the first time. Guard Kevin Covert was expected to help last season, but he has suffered injuries to both knees that have hampered his career. Gene Nabors started 23 games two years ago at LSU. The Colonials slowly are on the rise.

Last league title: 1992. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1992. **Site:** Coraopolis, Pa. **Home court:** Sewall Center (3,056).

9. MONMOUTH

Coach: Dave Calloway (3-10, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 4-23. Northeast: 3-13/8th.

Key players: Quin Hayes, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.9 ppg, 41.7 3-pt%, 22.3 mpg); Maurice Williams, G, 6-3/Sr. (9.7 ppg., 75.6 FT%, 1.0 spg, 26.6 mpg).

Outlook: Dave Calloway, 29, was the youngest Division I coach in the country when he was named to the job in late February. In a tumultuous six-month span, coach Wayne Szoke quit over perceived differences with the athletic administration, two players transferred, the team finished with the worst record in school history and three players, including star forward Joe Fermino, were dismissed from the team. Freshmen Raheem Carter and Andre Williams are quality recruits, and the late signing

RANK 23

BY TONY GRAHAM
Asbury Park (N.J.) Press

ALL-NORTHEAST

RICH DOMINGUEZ, F/G, 6-6/195, Soph., St. Francis (N.Y.).

RICHIE PARKER, F/G, 6-5/200, Jr., Long Island U.

FRANTZ PIERRE-LOUIS, C, 6-8/260, Sr., Wagner

GREGORY HARRIS, G, 6-3/195, Jr., Mount St. Mary's

RICK MICKENS, G, 6-4/185, Jr., Central Connecticut State

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

FRANTZ PIERRE-LOUIS, C, Wagner



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

LAMONT PERRY, G, Fairleigh Dickinson

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Jesper Rasmussen, Fairleigh Dickinson.

Best rebounder: Frantz Pierre-Louis, Wagner.

Best playmaker: Gregory Harris, Mount St. Mary's.

Best defender: Darryl Todd, Fairleigh Dickinson.

Best leaper: Buddy Smalls, Wagner.

Most versatile: Richy Dominguez, St. Francis (N.Y.).

Most flamboyant: Tim Hyland, Md.-Baltimore Co.

Best pro prospect: Frantz Pierre-Louis, Wagner.

of Alpha Bangura could help.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996. **Site:** West Long Branch, N.J. **Home court:** Boylan Gym (2,500).

10. ST. FRANCIS (PA.)

Coach: Tim McConnell (76-88, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 17-10. Northeast: 10-6/3rd.

Key players: Tom Fox, F, 6-7/Jr. (3.9 ppg, 9.3 mpg); Jamal Ragland, G, 5-10/Soph. (5.6 ppg, 4.6 apg, 1.2 spg, 28.9 mpg); Sam Sutton, F, 6-3/Soph. (9.3 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 1.2 spg, 25.8 mpg).

Outlook: Last year was the school's first winning season since 1991, but it might have been a Red Flash in the pan. The team lost five seniors and 62 percent of its offense. Coach Tom McConnell hopes 5-8 sophomore point guard Earl Foreman, a Prop 48 last season, will inject some spark.

Last league title: 1991.

Last NCAA appearance: 1991.

Site: Loretto, Pa. **Home court:** Stokes Athletic Ctr. (3,500).

11. QUINNIPIAC

Coach: Joe DeSantis (9-43, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 4-23. Northeast-10 (Division II): 3-17/11th.

Key players: Andrew Mackenzie, G, 6-3/Sr. (11.5 ppg, 84.7 FT%, 28.6 mpg); Nate Pondexter, G, 6-4/Jr. (JC).

Outlook: The Braves are making the jump from Division II with the second-worst record of any team involved in the transition since 1985, having posted a combined 14 victories during the past three seasons. And they open the season at UConn. This is a young team with a long way to go.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Hamden, Conn. **Home court:** Burt Kahn Court-Athletic Center (1,500).

TSN

1. GEORGIA STATE

Coach: Lefty Driesell (16-12, 1 year; 699-347 overall, 36 years; 15-13 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 16-12. TAAC West: 11-5/1st.

Key players: Quincy Gause, F, 6-6/Sr. (12.9 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 55.3 FG%, 73.6 FT%, 1.3 spg, 34.7 mpg); Torquin Gresham, F/C, 6-7/Jr. (7.3 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 59.4 FG%, 72.2 FT%, 1.5 bpg, 23.9 mpg); Maurice Robertson, F, 6-5/Sr. (11.0 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 28.4 mpg).

Outlook: Point guard Kevin Morris (transfer, Georgia Tech) and shooting guard Anton Reese (transfer, Alabama) give Georgia State experience in the backcourt. They will be just as good as the graduated tandem of Rodney Hamilton and Shellord Pinkett. The frontcourt starters return in Quincy Gause, Maurice Robertson and Torquin Gresham, although don't be surprised if five other transfers—four from JCs and former Texas A&M center Brad Stricker—see significant time.

Last league title: 1991. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1991. **Site:** Atlanta. **Home court:** GSU Sports Arena (5,500).

2. SAMFORD

Coach: Jimmy Tillette (14-13, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 14-13. TAAC West: 9-7/2nd.

Key players: Will Daniel, G, 6-4/Jr. (13.0 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 1.0 spg, 31.7 mpg); Mario Lopez, G, 6-1/Jr. (10.2 ppg, 46.2 FG%, 36.1 3-pt%, 79.7 FT%, 34.0 mpg); Reed Rawlings, F, 6-7/Jr. (12.1 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 36.8 3-pt%, 82.2 FT%, 1.2 spg, 29.3 mpg).

Outlook: The youngest team in the TAAC last year still will be one of the youngest—and still one of the best. Four junior starters return, including the backcourt of Will Daniel and Mario Lopez. The key to Sanford's success will rest on how well Reed Rawlings shoots from the outside and who the Bulldogs will rely on when their motion offense stalls.

Last league title: 1997 (West).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Birmingham, Ala. **Home court:** Seibert Hall (4,000).

3. CENTRAL FLORIDA

Coach: Kirk Speraw (67-74, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 17-11. TAAC East: 11-5/3rd.

Key players: Bucky Hodge, C, 6-9/Jr. (6.8 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 1.2 bpg, 20.5 mpg); D'Quarius Stewart, G, 6-2/Soph. (10.3 ppg, 79.0 FT%, 1.4 spg, 26.0 mpg); Brad Traina, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (15.4 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 48.2 FG%, 39.8 3-pt%, 75.9 FT%, 1.6 spg, 30.4 mpg).

Outlook: Gone is TAAC co-player of the year Mark Jones. But who's going to guard Brad Traina? One of the best shooters in the conference, Traina might average more than 15 points again—if someone steps up and gives UCF another scoring threat. If UCF follows its history, it won't find the answers until the end of the season, when it could be a force in the conference tournament.

Last league title: 1996. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996. **Site:** Orlando. **Home court:** UCF Arena (5,100).

4. JACKSONVILLE

Coach: Hugh Durham (8-19, 1 year; 536-330 overall, 30 years; 8-8 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 8-19. Sun Belt: 6-12/T 8th.

Key players: Jamar Bailey, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.7 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 27.0 mpg); Ty Jackson, G, 5-11/Sr. (7.4 ppg, 77.1 FT%, 1.4 spg, 28.3 mpg); Calvin Slaughter, F, 6-5/Jr. (JC); Shawn Platts, G, 6-3/Soph. (JC).

Outlook: Jacksonville is new to the conference, and most of its players (nine) are new to the Dolphins. Coach Hugh Durham had a solid recruiting year that includes seven JC transfers. Calvin Slaughter should be one of the best players in the TAAC, and Shawn Platts will take over at the point. The Dolphins host the conference tourney. How they do once they get there depends on how well Durham can get his newcomers to mesh.

Last league title: 1986 (Sun Belt).

Last NCAA appearance: 1986.

Site: Jacksonville. **Home court:** J'ville Coliseum (9,150).

5. CENTENARY

Coach: Billy Kennedy (10-20, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 10-20. TAAC West: 8-3/3rd.

Key players: Tim Law, G, 5-10/Sr. (11.5 ppg, 36.6 3-pt%,

4.6 apg, 2.1 spg, 33.6 mpg); Ronnie McCollum, G, 6-3/Soph. (17.5 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 41.9 3-pt%, 81.1 FT%, 30.5 mpg); Cornell Hardman, F, 6-5/Sr. (7.5 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 53.7 FG%, 23.5 mpg).

Outlook: After starting 0-4 in the TAAC last season, the Gents finished the regular season by winning eight of its last 12 games. Ronnie McCollum often was the star of the show. He won't surprise anyone this year, but he will have an up-and-coming supporting cast that is getting comfortable in coach Billy Kennedy's system. If 6-11 JC transfer Ben Horn clogs the middle, the Gents could pull some surprises.

Last league title: 1990. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Shreveport, La. **Home court:** The Gold Dome (5,000).

6. STETSON

Coach: Murray Arnold (11-15, 1 year; 376-189 overall, 19 years; 2-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 11-15. TAAC East: 8-8/4th.

Key players: Garrett Davis, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (13.2 ppg, 45.5 FG%, 38.4 3-pt%, 88.8 FT%, 27.8 mpg); Jamar Johnson, G, 6-2/Jr. (JC); Will Robertson, G/F, 6-6/Soph. (8.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 17.8 mpg).

Outlook: Stetson lost two of its top three scorers and its leading rebounder. The Hatters will try to pick up the tempo more to the liking of coach Murray Arnold. Transfers could be the key: guard Kelly Hite (Maryland), forward Sebastien Singletary (JC) and guard Shamar Johnson (JC).

Last league title: 1994. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** DeLand, Fla. **Home court:** Edmunds Center (5,000).

7. FLORIDA ATLANTIC

Coach: Kevin Billerman (30-51, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 5-22. TAAC East: 5-11/5th.

Key players: Damon Arnette, G, 6-5/Sr. (16.1 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 2.2 spg, 32.2 mpg); Gary Durrant, G, 6-5/Sr. (10.9 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 37.1 3-pt%, 26.3 mpg); James Turner, G, 6-2/Soph. (10.4 ppg, 82.9 FT%, 26 mpg).

Outlook: Who's going to play down low? Will it matter? This team will rely on quickness and will push the ball offensively. Jacksonville transfer Jevon Glenn takes over at point guard and will try to spark the TAAC's worst offensive team (61.8 ppg). For the first time, FAU is eligible for the TAAC Tournament.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Boca Raton, Fla. **Home court:** FAU Gym (5,000).

8. MERCER

Coach: Mark Slonaker (5-21, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 5-21. TAAC West: 2-14/6th.

Key players: Mark Adamson, F, 6-6/Jr. (13.0 ppg, 9.5 rpg, 54.7 FG%, 32.7 mpg); Evans Davis, F, 6-4/Sr. (11.0 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 1.1 spg, 25.0 mpg); Corey McCray, G, 6-1/Soph. (8.0 ppg, 38.4 3-pt%, 30.3 mpg).

Outlook: There's cautious optimism as coach Mark Slonaker enters the second year of a tough rebuilding process. Mark Adamson is as solid a frontcourt player as there is in the league. With Earnest Brown (transfer, Auburn) taking over at shooting guard and Terry Lawyer (transfer, Mississippi State) adding another weapon down low, Mercer could have one of the more balanced attacks in the league.

Last league title: 1985. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1985. **Site:** Macon, Ga. **Home courts:** Macon Centerplex (2,500); Porter Gym (500).

9. TROY STATE

Coach: Don Maestri (270-182, 16 years).

1997-98 record: 7-20. TAAC West: 5-11/5th.

Key players: Aldo Hudson, G, 6-1/Sr. (10.2 ppg, 1.2 spg, 24.7 mpg); Chad Jones, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (JC); Joey Raines, G, 6-3/Sr. (10.8 ppg, 77.8 FT%, 40.3 3-pt%, 20.7 mpg).

Outlook: With the Trojans losing their top two scorers and rebounders, ninth place might be an ambitious pick. Troy State had the worst field-goal percentage (37.6) in the league—and the worst field-goal percentage defense (47.1 percent). But the Trojans' up-tempo style will give them a few more wins than the conference bottom feeders.

By Bob Pockrass
Daytona Beach (Fla.) News Journal

ALL-TAAC

QUINCY GAUSE, F, 6-6/195, Sr., Georgia State
RONNIE MCCOLLUM, F, 6-3/195, Soph., Centenary
BRAD TRAINA, F, 6-5/215, Jr., Central Florida
WILL DANIEL, G, 6-4/195, Jr., Samford
ANTON REESE, G, 6-3/185, Jr., Georgia State

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

RONNIE MCCOLLUM, F, Centenary



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

ANTON REESE, G, Georgia State

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Ronnie McCollum, Centenary.

Best rebounder: Mark Adamson, Mercer.

Best playmaker: Damon Arnette, Florida Atlantic.

Best defender: Kevin Johnson, Stetson.

Best leaper: Quincy Gause, Georgia State.

Most versatile: Reed Rawlings, Samford.

Most flamboyant: Davin Granberry, Central Florida.

Best pro prospect: Brad Traina, Central Florida.

Last league title: 1994 (East Coast Conference).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Troy, Ala. **Home court:** Trojan Arena (4,000).

10. CAMPBELL

Coach: Billy Lee (175-190, 13 years; 296-278 overall, 20 years).

1997-98 record: 10-17. TAAC East: 4-12/6th.

Key players: Matt Mardis, G, 6-2/Jr. (8.5 ppg, 80.0 FT%, 21.3 mpg); Jamie Simmons, F, 6-5/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 52.3 FG%, 21.2 mpg).

Outlook: Coach Billy Lee keeps folks in stitches with his humor, but this team is not a laughing matter. The lack of a go-to player at crunch time—actually, a lack of a go-to player at anytime—will keep the Camels from winning many games.

Last league title: 1992. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1992. **Site:** Buies Creek, N.C. **Home court:** Carter Gym (945).

11. JACKSONVILLE STATE

Coach: Mark Turgeon (first year).

1997-98 record: 12-14. TAAC West: 6-10/4th.

Key players: Alex Beason, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (11.6 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 41.1 3-pt%, 79.7 FT%, 27.5 mpg); Derrell Johnson, G, 6-1/Jr. (16.9 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 38.2 3-pt%, 77.5 FT%, 27.5 mpg).

Outlook: Mark Turgeon, the only first-year coach in the league, arrives after serving as an assistant with the Philadelphia 76ers. Although JSU returns three starters, the Gamecocks will miss Jay Knowlton (16.2 ppg, 5.7 rpg). JSU's six league wins last year were by an average of four points, while it lost its 10 league games by an average of 11.2 points. That margin of defeat could stay the same—but the number of defeats will increase as this team adjusts to Turgeon's style.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None. **Site:** Jacksonville, Ala. **Home court:** Mathews Coliseum (5,500).

TSN

IVY LEAGUE



BY MARK ECKEL
Trenton (N.J.) Times

1. PRINCETON

Coach: Bill Carmody (51-6, 2 years; 1-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 27-2. Ivy: 14-0/1st. Lost to Michigan State in NCAA East second round.

Key players: Brian Earl, G, 6-2/Sr. (13.1 ppg, 47.2 FG%, 43.9 3-pt%, 76.4 FT%, 1.7 spg, 34.1 mpg); Gabe Lewullis, F, 6-6/Sr. (14.2 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 51.1 FG%, 41.4 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 34.7 mpg); C.J. Chapman, G, 6-1/Soph. (9.1 mpg); Chris Young, C, 6-10/Fr.; Chris Krug, C, 6-9, Fr.

Outlook: The Tigers lost the two best players in the league when center Steve Goodrich and guard Mitch Henderson graduated. That's all right, because they still have the two best players in the league in forward Gabe Lewullis and guard Brian Earl. They also landed the two best recruits in Chris Young, from Dallas, and Chris Krug, from Philadelphia. That's what happens when you're an Ivy team ranked in the nation's Top 25 all season. Coach Bill Carmody, who brings a gaudy 51-6 record into his third season, might find it a little tougher to crack the Top 25 this season, and he might even lose his first Ivy League game. But he won't relinquish the league title.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1995.

Site: Princeton, N.J. **Home court:** Jadwin Gym (6,854).

2. PENNSYLVANIA

Coach: Fran Dunphy (152-91, 9 years; 1-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-12. Ivy: 10-4/2nd.

Key players: Michael Jordan, G, 6-0/Jr. (15.3 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 44.0 3-pt%, 5.0 apg, 1.7 spg, 35.8 mpg); Matt Langel, G, 6-5/Jr. (13.5 ppg, 48.8 FG%, 83.3 FT%, 50.0 3-pt%, 32.0 mpg); Lamar Plummer, G, 6-0/Soph. (4.3 ppg, 38.1 3-pt%, 13.1 mpg); Paul Romanczuk, F, 6-7/Sr. (14.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 54.5 FG%, 29.7 mpg); Jed Ryan, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.1 ppg, 4.1 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 46.2 3-pt%, 28.6 mpg).

Outlook: Penn is deep and talented, but it isn't deep and talented enough to dethrone Princeton. When the Quakers lost top recruit Chris Krug to their archrival, they might have lost their shot at the league title as well. Still, the likes of Michael Jordan and Paul Romanczuk should be enough to make Princeton sweat, and they might be enough to snap the Tigers' 28-game league unbeaten streak. Still, it looks as if coach Fran Dunphy and Co. will have to settle for being second-best again.

Last league title: 1995.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Philadelphia. **Home court:** The Palestra (8,700).

3. COLUMBIA

Coach: Armond Hill (24-54, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 11-15. Ivy: 6-8/14th.

Key players: Erik Crep, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.3 ppg, 82.1 FT%, 38.0 3-pt%, 33.1 mpg); Justin Namolik, F, 6-6/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 46.4 FG%, 1.2 spg, 30.7 mpg); Gary Raimondo, G, 6-2/Sr. (14.7 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 2.4 spg, 34.2 mpg).

Outlook: Look for the resurgence to continue this season at Columbia, as coach Armond Hill had a good recruiting year and there are four starters returning from last season's team, which had four wins in its last six games. Gary Raimondo and Justin Namolik are four-year players who give the Lions a dependable inside-outside punch. Columbia might not be ready for Princeton and Penn, but the Lions might be ready for a bronze just two years after a dreadful 1-13 Ivy finish.

Last league title: 1968.

Last NCAA appearance: 1968.

Site: New York. **Home court:** Levien Gym (3,400).

4. CORNELL

Coach: Scott Thompson (24-28, 2 years; 129-177 overall, 11 years).

1997-98 record: 9-17. Ivy: 6-8/14th.

Key players: Jeffirion Aubry, C, 6-11/Sr. (8.9 ppg, 7.0 rpg, 48.1 FG%, 2.2 bpg, 22.9 mpg); Kevin Cuttica, G, 6-3/Soph. (8.1 ppg, 75.5 FT%, 1.0 spg, 34.4 mpg); Ray Mercedes, F, 6-5/Soph. (12.6 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 26.9 mpg).

Outlook: The Big Red had a chance for their second consecutive winning season and perhaps a third-place finish in the league until they won just three of their final 10 games. One of those three wins came against Penn, and it could serve as motivation for this season. But if coach Scott Thompson is to avoid another losing season, he must get some backcourt help to go with Ray Mercedes and Jeffirion Aubry.

Last league title: 1988.

Last NCAA appearance: 1988.

Site: Ithaca, N.Y. **Home court:** Newman Arena (4,473).

5. HARVARD

Coach: Frank Sullivan (72-110, 7 years; 186-196 overall, 14 years).

1997-98 record: 13-13. Ivy: 6-8/14th.

Key players: Dan Clemente, F, 6-7/Soph. (13.8 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 47.6 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 43.2 3-pt%, 33.2 mpg); Paul Fisher, C, 6-8/Sr. (10.7 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 31.7 mpg); Tim Hill, G, 5-11/Sr. (14.9 ppg, 83.0 FT%, 5.3 apg, 1.7 spg, 39.2 mpg).

Outlook: The last time the Crimson went to the NCAA Tournament was 1946. Don't look for that streak to end any time soon. Harvard has the league's best point guard in Tim Hill—who also showed last season that he can score—and last year's league rookie of the year in power forward Dan Clemente. But there's not much else. Coach Frank Sullivan needs to get the most out of shooting guard Mike Beam and center Paul Fisher to challenge Cornell for fourth place and maybe Columbia for third. But don't expect too much more.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1946.

Site: Cambridge, Mass. **Home court:** Lavietes Pavilion (2,195).

6. YALE

Coach: Dick Kuchen (147-167, 12 years; 230-281 overall, 19 years).

1997-98 record: 12-14. Ivy: 7-7/3rd.

Key players: David Tompkins, F, 6-6/Sr. (9.9 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 66.4 FG%, 1.0 spg, 27.9 mpg); Charlie Petit, F, 6-1/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 84.4 FT%, 37.9 3-pt%, 1.2 spg, 21.9 mpg); Marlon Simpkins, G, 5-11/Sr. (5.0 ppg, 1.4 spg, 24.2 mpg).

Outlook: The Bulldogs surprised a lot of people last season with a third-place finish. Gone from the best Yale team since a second-place finish in 1992 are its top two scorers—All-Ivy selection Emerson Whitley and Matt Ricketts—and team leader Gabe Hunterton. David Tompkins, the leading rebounder, returns along with fellow seniors Charlie Petit and Marlon Simpkins. But none provides as much scoring as Whitley. That leaves coach Dick Kuchen with another rebuilding job, and more than likely another finish near the bottom of the league.

Last league title: 1962.

Last NCAA appearance: 1962.

Site: New Haven, Conn. **Home court:** John J. Lee Amphitheater (3,100).

7. DARTMOUTH

Coach: Dave Faucher (85-97, 7 years).

1997-98 record: 7-19. Ivy: 4-10/17th.

Key players: Greg Buth, G, 6-3/Soph. (5.6 ppg, 22.3 mpg); Shaun Gee, F, 6-7/Jr. (18.3 ppg, 6.0 rpg, 49.1 FG%, 40.6 3-pt%, 1.0 spg, 37.0 mpg); Ian McGinnis, F, 6-8/Soph. (8.5 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 33.3 mpg).

Outlook: When Dartmouth had the talent to challenge

ALL-IVY

GABE LEWULLIS, F, 6-6/210, Sr., Princeton
RAY MERCEDES, F, 6-6/215, Cornell
PAUL ROMANCZUK, F, 6-7/220, Sr., Penn
BRIAN EARL, G, 6-2/180, Sr., Princeton
MICHAEL JORDAN, G, 6-0/170, Jr., Penn

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BRIAN EARL, G, Princeton



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

CHRIS YOUNG, C, Princeton

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Brian Earl, Princeton

Best rebounder: David Tompkins, Yale.

Best playmaker: Tim Hill, Harvard.

Best defender: Jeffirion Aubry, Cornell.

Best leaper: Ray Mercedes, Cornell.

Most versatile: Gabe Lewullis, Princeton.

Most flamboyant: Ray Mercedes, Cornell.

Best pro prospect: none.

Princeton and Penn a few years ago, the Big Green still fell short. Now, in the midst of a rebuilding project, coach Dave Faucher's team is at the other end of the league, challenging Brown to stay out of the cellar. Last season the Big Green lost seven of their last eight games, with the only win coming against Brown. Shaun Gee, a legitimate scorer, can make Dartmouth games worth watching and Ian McGinnis has loads of promise, but don't count on a lot of victories in Hanover this season.

Last league title: 1959.

Last NCAA appearance: 1959.

Site: Hanover, N.H. **Home court:** Leede Arena (2,100).

8. BROWN

Coach: Frank Dobbs (63-119, 7 years).

1997-98 record: 6-20. Ivy: 3-11/8th.

Key players: Kamal Rountree, F, 6-8/Sr. (8.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 48.0 FG%, 20.1 mpg); Corey Vandiver, G, 6-0/Jr. (5.9 ppg, 24.8 mpg).

Outlook: You have to wonder how much longer coach Frank Dobbs can keep his nickname of "Happy." There haven't been a lot of pleasant moments for the Bears the past two seasons (10-42 overall, 6-22 in the league). And there's not much to suggest that there won't be more struggles this year. Brown shot 38.2 percent from the field last season and had 102 more turnovers than assists.

Last league title: 1986.

Last NCAA appearance: 1986.

Site: Providence, R.I. **Home court:** Pizzitro Sports Center (12,800).

TSN

1. TEXAS SOUTHERN

Coach: Robert Moreland (370-296, 23 years; 642-372 overall, 35 years; 0-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 15-16. SWAC: 12-4/1st.

Key players: Ifey Anyanwu, F, 6-7/Jr. (8.7 ppg, 7.2 rpg, 50.5 FG%, 28.1 mpg); Leland "Paco" Redmond, G, 6-0/Sr. (8.1 ppg, 6.0 apg, 29.5 mpg); John Rhodes, C, 6-8/Sr. (7.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 25.6 mpg).

Outlook: Texas Southern rebounded from a horrendous 1-11 start last season to win the regular-season championship and reach the tournament final. The Tigers should remain the SWAC's team of the '90s despite the loss of two-time conference player of the year Randy Bolden. They have a strong nucleus returning, led by talented point guard Leland Redmond, underrated forward Ifey Anyanwu and tenacious center John Rhodes. If this team lives up to its expectations, give credit to Robert Moreland, the best coach in the SWAC.

Last league title: 1998.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Houston. **Home court:** Health and PE Arena (8,100).

2. SOUTHERN

Coach: Tommy Green (24-30, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 14-13. SWAC: 10-6/3rd.

Key players: Aaron Bates, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (11.2 ppg, 35.1 3-pt%, 19.2 mpg); Dionte' Harvey, G, 6-4/Sr. (18.7 ppg, 35.2% 3-pt%, 78.0 FT%, 2.0 spg, 30.3 mpg); Adarral Smylie, C, 6-7/Jr. (15.0 ppg, 8.6 rpg, 49.5 FG%, 75.9 FT%, 1.3 spg, 1.5 bpg, 29.4 mpg).

Outlook: This is a veteran team featuring four returning starters, including potential SWAC Player of the Year Dionte Harvey. The Jaguars lack size, so look for them to struggle against big foes. Fortunately, few SWAC teams boast much size. Southern, which must avoid the inconsistency that plagued it last season, will be tested by a daunting non-league schedule.

Last league title: 1990.

Last NCAA appearance: 1993.

Site: Baton Rouge, La. **Home court:** Clark Activity Center (7,500).

3. GRAMBLING

Coach: Lacey Reynolds (38-45, 3 years; 62-66 overall, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 16-12. SWAC: 10-6/3rd.

Key players: Thomas Dodd, C, 6-10/Sr. (11.8 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 76.5 FT%, 1.8 bpg, 28.3 mpg); Kenny Haynes, G, 6-0/Sr. (13.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 46.5 FG%, 79.2 FT%, 4.6 apg, 2.7 spg, 37.1 mpg); Chris Thomas, F, 6-7/Jr. (13.4 ppg, 6.5 rpg, 59.8 FG%, 29.0 mpg).

Outlook: No one did a better job last season than Lacey Reynolds, whose team finished with a winning record and claimed third place despite predictions of a last-place finish. Kenny Haynes established himself as one of the premier guards in the conference. Don't count out the Tigers.

Last league title: 1989 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Grambling, La. **Home court:** Memorial Gym (4,000).

4. JACKSON STATE

Coach: Andy Stoglin (138-128, 9 years; 171-151 overall, 11 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 14-13. SWAC: 11-5/2nd.

Key players: Richard Bradley, F, 6-4/Soph. (5.0 ppg, 50.5 FG%, 11.8 mpg); Vincent Jones, C, 6-11/Jr. (1.7 bpg, 11.9 mpg); Marino Walker, G, 6-3/Jr. (11.7 mpg).

Outlook: The Tigers must replace all five starters, although many youngsters gained valuable experience last year. Still, the inexperience could prove to be a big handicap. Point guard could be strong, as Marino Walker and three newcomers appear capable of running the show.

Last league title: 1996 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Jackson, Miss. **Home court:** Williams Athletics & Assembly Center (8,000).

5. ALABAMA STATE

Coach: Rob Spivery (19-38, 2 years; 193-183 overall, 13 years).

1997-98 record: 11-17. SWAC: 6-10/16th.

Key players: Tobarie Burton, G, 6-1/Soph. (5.4 ppg, 1.9 spg, 28.4 mpg); Jasaan Moncrief, G, 5-10/Sr. (7.9 ppg, 78.0 FT%, 22.4 mpg); Terrance Simmons, C, 6-6/Jr. (13.0 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 53.9 FG%, 26.0 mpg); Corey Williams, F, 6-3/Sr. (14.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 1.9 spg, 27.1 mpg).

Outlook: Looking for a SWAC dark horse? Look no further than Alabama State, which returns a veteran team capable of contending for the title. Jasaan Moncrief, Terrance Simmons and Corey Williams are three of the league's most talented and underrated players. The Hornets should retain momentum from last season, when they won four of their last seven games, including a first-round SWAC Tournament victory.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Montgomery, Ala. **Home court:** J.L. Reed Acadome (8,000).

6. ALCORN STATE

Coach: Davey Whitney (418-232, 22 years; 473-295 overall, 27 years; 3-4 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 12-15. SWAC: 8-8/5th.

Key players: Brian Adams, F, 6-6/Jr. (11.1 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 53.3 FG%, 36.7 3-pt%, 25.5 mpg); Orko Guyton, C, 6-10/Sr. (7.8 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 55.8 FG%, 1.1 spg, 1.1 bpg, 22.9 mpg); Reuben Stiff, G, 5-9/Jr. (11.9 ppg, 73.0 FT%, 37.9 3-pt%, 6.0 apg, 2.0 spg, 31.9 mpg).

Outlook: Time is running out for Davey Whitney, who returned to the once-proud Alcorn State program in 1996-97 with the hopes of turning it over to a successor several years later. The Braves took a step backward last season, finishing in the second division despite being picked as high as third. Brian Adams and Reuben Stiff need help from the supporting cast if Alcorn State is to challenge for the title.

Last league title: 1986 (tie).

Last NCAA appearance: 1984.

Site: Lorman, Miss. **Home court:** Whitney Complex (7,000).

7. MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

Coach: Lafayette Stribling (216-222, 15 years; 0-3 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 6-21. SWAC: 6-10/16th.

Key players: Corey Battee, F, 6-6/Jr. (7.4 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 63.8 FG%, 24.7 mpg); Derrick McInnis, C, 6-10/Soph. (3.4 rpg, 1.1 bpg, 10.9 mpg); Kirby Oliver, F, 6-5/Jr. (9.4 ppg, 17.4 mpg).

Outlook: No team was more disappointing last season than Mississippi Valley, which never recovered from an 0-10 start. This is a young team, but there is size up front. Derrick McInnis and guard Eltra Leigh must step up for a team that will play good defense. The Delta Devils are inexperienced and will rely on their inside game while the perimeter guys develop.

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1995.

Site: Itta Bena, Miss. **Home court:** Harrison Complex (5,500).

8. PRAIRIE VIEW

Coach: Elwood Plummer (121-257, 8 years; 297-363 overall, 14 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-17. SWAC: 6-10/16th. Lost to Kansas in NCAA Midwest first round.

Key players: Jacquinn Arch, G/F, 6-4/Sr. (7.0 ppg, 16.3 mpg); Sylvester Lilly, G, 5-8/Sr. (11.8 mpg); Aron Thompson, C, 6-8/Jr. (5.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 19.1 mpg); Omari Taylor, F, 6-6/Jr. (10.5 mpg).

Outlook: Where to begin? Prairie View shocked the college basketball world with its first NCAA Tournament berth last season despite posting a losing record. A repeat is unlikely for the Panthers, who lost eight seniors from that team. No returning player averaged more 7.0 points, 4.5 rebounds or 19.1 minutes.

Last league title: 1962.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Prairie View, Tex. **Home court:** Baby Dome (5,000).

9. ARK.-PINE BLUFF

Coach: Harold Blevins (23-51, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 4-23. SWAC: 3-13/9th.

By **SCOTT GREMILLION**
Baton Rouge (La.) Advocate

ALL-SWAC TEAM

CHRIS THOMAS, F, 6-7/245, Jr., Grambling.
ADARRAL SMYLIE, C, 6-8/220, Jr., Southern.
DIONTE' HARVEY, G, 6-4/175, Sr., Southern.
LELAND REDMOND, G, 6-0/170, Sr., Texas Southern.
REUBEN STIFF, G, 5-11/180, Sr., Alcorn State.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

DIONTE' HARVEY, G, Southern.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

WILLIE GROSS, G, Jackson State.

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Dionte Harvey, Southern.

Best rebounder: Adarral Smylie, Southern.

Best playmaker: Jasaan Moncrief, Alabama State.

Best defender: Thomas Dodd, Texas Southern.

Best leaper: Patrick Dyse, Texas Southern.

Most versatile: Brian Adams, Alcorn State.

Most flamboyant: Kenny Haynes, Grambling.

Best pro prospect: Dionte Harvey, Southern.

Key players: Patrick Chambers, F, 6-6/Sr. (13.7 ppg, 7.5 rpg, 63.7 FG%, 1.7 spg, 1.1 bpg, 31.9 mpg); Terrance Duncan, G/F, 6-7/Sr. (9.3 ppg, 47.9 FG%, 21.9 mpg); Damon Horton, G, 5-11/Jr. (6.4 ppg, 19.3 mpg); Antonio Moore, G, 5-7/Jr. (1.9 spg, 20.3 mpg).

Outlook: Arkansas-Pine Bluff arguably was the worst Division I team last season, not surprising since the Golden Lions were making the transition from NAIA. They finished at or near the bottom in the SWAC in all but one statistical category, were outscored by an average of 13.3 points and outrebounded by an average of 6.2. If last season was any indication, Patrick Chambers could be the lone bright spot in another long year.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Pine Bluff, Ark. **Home court:** Hyper Complex (4,500).

ALABAMA A&M

Coach: Vann Pettaway (281-83, 12 years).

1997-98 record: 18-9 in Division II.

Key players: Damien Crayton, G, 6-0/Soph. (7.9 ppg, 2.1 spg, 16.6 mpg); Eric Edwards, F, 6-5/Jr. (10.8 ppg, 7.7 rpg, 49.1 FG%, 1.0 spg, 23.7 mpg); Terrance Vanlier, F, 6-5/Jr. (13.0 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.6 bpg, 25.2 mpg).

Outlook: The Bulldogs are making the jump from Division II to Division I. They won't be eligible for the SWAC title this year, but it doesn't matter. Vann Pettaway has done a good job in 12 years and eventually will get A&M on track in Division I. He has good guards to work with, but the frontcourt is weak.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Normal, Ala. **Home court:** Elmore Gym (6,000). **TSN**

1. SOUTHWEST TEXAS

Coach: Mike Miller (56-53, 4 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 17-11. Southland: 10-6/T2nd.

Key players: Clifton Ellis, G, 6-0/Sr. (5.7 ppg, 90.0 FT%, 1.0 spg, 24.8 mpg); Jeff Foster, C, 6-11/Sr. (12.8 ppg, 10.2 rpg, 53.2 FG%, 1.3 spg, 1.0 bpg, 29.1 mpg); Donte Mathis, G, 6-4/Sr. (18.6 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 49.6 FG%, 77.0 FT%, 42.3 3-pt%, 1.5 spg, 33.8 mpg).

Outlook: The Bobcats were first in the league in scoring, defense, rebounding margin (+6) and field-goal percentage (45.9) last season. They are physical on defense and patient on offense. Three starters and eight lettermen return, including guard Donte Mathis, who scored in double figures every game last season. If the Bobcats have a weakness, it's their lack of scoring punch after Mathis and Jeff Foster.

Last league title: 1997. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997. **Site:** San Marcos, Texas. **Home court:** Strahan Coliseum (7,200).

2. LAMAR

Coach: Grey Giovannone (63-74, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 15-14. Sun Belt: 7-11/7th.

Key players: Marlene Jackson, F/G, 6-8/Jr. (8.7 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 57.4 FG%, 25.3 mpg); Malcolm McCreight, G, 5-8/Jr. (JC); Matt Sundblad, G, 6-2/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 92.3 FT%, 1.0 spg, 29.2 mpg).

Outlook: Lamar, a member of the Sun Belt Conference the past seven years, rejoins the SLC this season; Lamar was a charter member of the SLC in 1963. The Cardinals are rejoining the league at a good time, as 52 percent of their scoring and 66 percent of their rebounding returns. Matt Sundblad led the NCAA in free-throw percentage last season. Lamar outrebounded foes by 111 last season and should again be strong on the glass.

Last league title: 1984 (Southland).

Last NCAA appearance: 1983.

Site: Beaumont, Texas. **Home court:** Montagne Center (10,080).

3. TEXAS-SAN ANTONIO

Coach: Tim Carter (39-42, 3 years; 50-58 overall, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 16-11. Southland: 10-6/T2nd.

Key players: Steve Meyer, G, 6-3/Sr. (15.9 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 47.9 FG%, 77.5 FT%, 1.0 spg, 31.6 mpg); Leon Watson, C, 6-8/Jr. (14.1 ppg, 9.7 rpg, 61.6 FG%, 1.3 spg, 2.4 bpg, 31.4 mpg); Lloyd Williams, G, 5-9/Jr. (7.0 ppg, 4.3 apg, 2.0 spg, 31.0 mpg).

Outlook: The Roadrunners should be a contender because they usually are one of the most athletic teams in the league. Lloyd Williams is one of the top assist men in the league. UTSA should be one of the top defensive teams in the conference, but it needs someone to step up on the perimeter.

Last league title: 1992. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1988.

Site: San Antonio. **Home court:** UTSA Convocation Center (5,100).

4. NE LOUISIANA

Coach: Mike Vining (307-196, 17 years; 0-7 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 13-16. Southland: 8-8/T5th.

Key players: Marcus Anthony, G, 6-2/Jr. (15.0 ppg, 38.7 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 24.6 mpg); Todd Daniels, G, 5-9/Jr. (JC); Michael Smith, G, 6-7/Jr. (JC).

Outlook: Northeast Louisiana could have the horses to win the SLC title. The Indians had the league's best recruiting classes, including 6-7 JC transfer Mike Smith and 7-0 Wojciech Myrda, a Polish native who prepped in Monroe, La. Yet another top recruit is guard Todd Daniels, a playmaker who turned down LSU to sign with Northeast Louisiana. All of the newcomers should make for an interesting season for NLU, which has finished first or second 12 times during its 16 years in the league.

Last league title: 1997. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1996.

Site: Monroe, La. **Home court:** Ewing Coliseum (8,000).

5. NICHOLLS STATE

Coach: Ricky Broussard (109-112, 8 years; 0-2 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 19-10. Southland: 15-1/1st. Lost to Arizona in NCAA West first round.

Key players: James Banks, G, 6-3/Jr. (7.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 4.9 apg, 2.5 spg, 29.6 mpg); Jason McCutcheon, F, 6-7/Sr.

(14.2 ppg, 5.9 rpg, 51.2 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 2.0 spg, 1.3 bpg, 30.3 mpg); Lorenzo Wright, F, 6-7/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 48.4 FG%, 15.8 mpg).

Outlook: The Colonels' biggest strength was pressure defense, and that shouldn't change; they led the league in turnover margin (+3.5) and steals (10.2 pg). The roster is made up of slashers, led by Jason McCutcheon, one of the more athletic players in the SLC. Nicholls State won last season despite lacking an inside presence. Junior Cedric Marie, a 7-footer from France who redshirted last season, could fill that role.

Last league title: 1998. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1998.

Site: Thibodaux, La. **Home court:** Stophar Gym (3,800).

6. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN

Coach: Derek Allister (22-31, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 10-16. Southland: 6-10/8th.

Key players: Patrick Gusters, F, 6-4/Soph. (10.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 46.0 FG%, 77.6 FT%, 21.8 mpg); Aaron Radl, G, 6-0/Soph. (6.7 ppg, 36.8 3-pt%, 3.9 apg, 2.3 spg, 32.6 mpg); Keith Tate, F, 6-10/Sr. (14.0 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 77.5 FT%, 28.7 mpg).

Outlook: This will be one of the youngest teams in the league, as SFA returns one senior and five sophomores. The team needs productive play from its inside players; league foes outrebounded SFA by 106 last year. Patrick Gusters appears to be on the verge of a breakthrough season after playing well down the stretch last year.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Nacogdoches, Texas. **Home court:** William R. Johnson Coliseum (7,200).

7. TEXAS-ARLINGTON

Coach: Eddie McCarter (69-97, 6 years).

1997-98 record: 13-16. Southland: 8-8/T5th.

Key players: Donald Harris, G, 6-5/Sr. (13.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 27.0 mpg); Jared Hiple, C, 6-8/Sr. (7.7 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 58.5 FG%, 22.0 mpg); Bill Washington, F, 6-5/Jr. (12.9 ppg, 8.7 rpg, 54.5 FG%, 1.9 spg, 34.0 mpg).

Outlook: The Mavericks came out of nowhere to advance to the SLC Tournament final. SLC tourney MVP Donald Harris and Bill Washington form one of the best inside-outside combos in the league. This team could be dangerous if other players develop.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Arlington, Texas. **Home court:** Texas Hall (4,200).

8. MCNEESE STATE

Coach: Ron Everhart (51-59, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 7-19. Southland: 4-12/9th.

Key players: Pierre Brown, G, 6-2/Soph. (13.3 ppg, 51.7 FG%, 41.5 3-pt%, 1.3 spg, 28.4 mpg); Demond Mallet, G, 6-1/Jr. (18.9 ppg, 85.3 FT%, 36.4 3-pt%, 1.7 spg, 35.6 mpg); Franklin Paul, F, 6-3/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 7.6 rpg, 2.5 spg, 30.2 mpg).

Outlook: With Demond Mallet, Pierre Brown and Franklin Paul returning as starters, the Cowboys could be dangerous. Mallet led the SLC in scoring and scored 30 points four times last season. The Cowboys' biggest problem last year was a lack of size: They were outrebounded by 137. The Cowboys hope to get some help from newcomers Fred Gentry (6-8) and Adrian Johnson (6-7).

Last league title: 1997. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1989.

Site: Lake Charles, La. **Home court:** Burton Coliseum (8,000).

9. NORTHWESTERN STATE

Coach: J.D. Barnett (44-64, 4 years; 335-237 overall, 20 years).

1997-98 record: 13-14. Southland: 10-6/T2nd.

Key players: Jerrold McRae, F, 6-5/Fr.; Alann Polk, G, 6-3/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 40.5 3-pt%, 15.7 mpg); Richard Taylor, G/F, 6-3/Jr. (JC).

Outlook: The Demons lost all five starters. Coach J.D. Barnett signed a handful of JC transfers for help, including swingman Richard Taylor. A staple of Barnett's teams is good defense. It had better be good this season, as this team might have trouble scoring.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Natchitoches, La. **Home court:** Prather Coliseum (3,900).

10. SE LOUISIANA

Coach: John Lyles (43-66, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 6-20. Southland: 2-14/10th.

BY KEVIN GORE

The Daily Sentinel (Nacogdoches, Texas)

ALL-SOUTHLAND

JEFF FOSTER, C, 6-11/235, Sr., Southwest Texas.

MARLONE JACKSON, F, 6-8/220, Jr., Lamar.

JASON MCCUTCHEON, F, 6-7/198, Sr., Nicholls State.

DEMOND MALLET, G, 6-1/180, Jr., McNeese State.

DONTE MATHIS, G, 6-4/185, Sr., Southwest Texas.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

DONTE MATHIS, G, SW Texas.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

MICHAEL SMITH, G, NE Louisiana

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Demond Mallet, McNeese State.

Best rebounder: Bill Washington, Texas-Arlington.

Best playmaker: Lloyd Williams, Texas-San Antonio.

Best defender: Jeff Foster, Southwest Texas.

Best leaper: Michael Smith, Northeast Louisiana.

Most versatile: Steve Meyer, Texas-San Antonio.

Most flamboyant: Steve Meyer, Texas-San Antonio.

Best pro prospect: Jeff Foster, Southwest Texas.

Key players: Cory Combs, F, 6-6/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 5.5 rpg, 49.4 FG%, 25.6 mpg); Noble Evans, F/C, 6-6/Sr. (11.6 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 59.0 FG%, 1.3 spg, 28.1 mpg); Troy Green, G, 5-10/Sr. (11.3 ppg, 36.8 3-pt%, 85.9 FT%, 5.1 apg, 1.0 spg, 26.0 mpg).

Outlook: In their first season in the SLC, the Lions were eighth in the nation in 3-pointers made, hitting 8.7 per game. Despite the poor record, the bombs-away philosophy should continue. The Lions should look inside to Noble Evans more often. Se Louisiana should be able to score, but it will need to play much better defense.

Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.

Site: Hammond, La. **Home court:** University Center (7,500).

11. SAM HOUSTON STATE

Coach: Bob Marlin (first year).

1997-98 record: 9-17. Southland: 7-9/7th.

Key players: David Amaya, F, 6-7/Jr. (11.2 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 49.0 FG%, 77.2 FT%, 23.1 mpg); Jeremy Burkhalter, F, 6-4/Soph. (14.9 ppg, 45.7 FG%, 39.4 3-pt%, 77.5 FT%, 30.8 mpg); Boney Watson, G, 5-11/Jr. (7.3 ppg, 35.1 3-pt%, 5.9 apg, 1.9 spg, 33.5 mpg).

Outlook: The Bearcats are in transition. New coach Bob Marlin, a former Alabama assistant, takes over for Jerry Hopkins, who was fired. Marlin won a national title at Pensacola (Fla.) JC before his stint with the Tide. Sam Houston State has some talent, including playmaker Boney Watson. But don't expect miracles. Marlin wasn't hired until the first week of August, and he'll be learning his personnel while other league coaches are trying to set a rotation for the season.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Huntsville, Texas. **Home court:** Johnson Coliseum (5,600).

TSN

MID-EASTERN ATHLETIC



1. COPPIN STATE

Coach: Ron "Fang" Mitchell (226-128, 12 years; 1-3 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 21-8. MEAC: 17-1/1st.
Key Players: Rafi Reavis, F/C, 6-9/Sr. (13.4 mpg); Jerel Seamon, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (3.9 pp, 14.8 mpg); Fred Warrick, G/F, 6-5/Sr. (12.9 pp, 4.4 rpg, 77.3 FT%, 27.2 mpg).
Outlook: Four starters are gone, but Coppin usually finds a way to reload. This season will be no different. The Eagles always are tough defensively. For that reason, they're always going to be in the hunt. Offensively, they'll get more low-post scoring than in recent seasons. Proven scoring and point guard experience are problems. Coppin will be challenged. But, as usual, the Eagles find a way to prevail.
Last league title: 1998. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1997.
Site: Baltimore. **Home court:** Coppin Center (3,000).

2. HAMPTON

Coach: Steve Merfeld (14-12, 1 year).
1997-98 record: 14-12. MEAC: 11-7/3rd.
Key players: Greg Brown, G, 6-3/Jr. (12.4 pp, 5.1 rpg, 85 FT%); Torrey Farrington, G, 5-10/Jr. (12.8 pp, 3.4 rpg); Tarvis Williams, F, 6-8/Soph. (12.2 pp, 6.4 rpg, 56.0 FG%, 3.1 bpg).
Outlook: With four returning starters, the Pirates are set to challenge for the top spot. The inside game is exceptional, with reigning MEAC Rookie of Year Tarvis Williams leading the way. The backcourt is solid and productive. This could be the breakthrough season for Hampton.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Hampton, Va. **Home court:** Convocation Center (7,500).

3. MORGAN STATE

Coach: Chris Fuller (28-53, 3 years).
1997-98 record: 12-16. MEAC: 11-8/3rd.
Key players: Michael Canaday, C, 6-11/Soph. (1.5 pp, 16.0 mpg); Curtis King, F, 6-7/Soph. (7.2 pp, 1.4 bpg, 21.2 mpg); Rasheed Sparks, F/G, 6-3/Sr. (14.9 pp, 6.0 rpg, 48.0 FG%, 1.9 spg, 1.1 bpg, 30.0 mpg).
Outlook: The Bears have inside size and ample athleticism, and they figure to be one of the league's better rebounding teams. Swingman Rasheed Sparks is arguably the MEAC's most exciting performer. The key for the Bears is the backcourt. Last year's starting guards have graduated, so the Bears need a savvy floor general to orchestrate matters. If Morgan can develop quality backups at guard, it is going to be tough to handle.
Last league title: 1977. **Last NCAA appearance:** 1977.
Site: Baltimore. **Home court:** Hill Field House (4,500).

4. S.C. STATE

Coach: Cy Alexander (186-134, 11 years; 0-3 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 22-8. MEAC: 16-2/2nd. Lost to Kentucky in NCAA South first round.
Key players: Coray Davis, F, 6-5/Jr. (5.8 pp); Duane Johnson, C, 6-10/Soph. (5.8 pp, 5.4 rpg, 1.7 bpg); James Jones, G, 6-4/Jr. (9.5 pp); Raheem Waller, C, 6-8/Jr. (7.0 pp, 7.9 rpg).
Outlook: Point guard Roderick "Moo Moo" Blakney is gone, as is his backcourt partner Tyler Brown. Together, they averaged nearly 37 points. The question: Who will light up the scoreboard? James Jones, a reserve last season, is a capable scorer. But South Carolina State can't win consistently if Jones becomes a solo act on offense. Enter JC transfer point guard Mike Waitre. Forwards Terry Smith-Harris and Dexter Hall, along with guard Arthur Carlisle, are newcomers expected to give the Bulldogs a big lift.
Last league title: 1996 (tie).
Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.
Site: Orangeburg, S.C. **Home court:** Smith-Hammond Memorial Center (3,200).

5. N.C. A&T

Coach: Roy Thomas (48-64, 4 years; 300-202 overall, 13 years; 0-1 NCAA Tournament record).
1997-98 record: 8-19. MEAC: 7-11/6th.
Key players: Marque Carrington, G, 6-2/Soph. (6.5 pp); Albert Perkins, F, 6-6/Jr. (9.7 pp, 3.1 rpg, 54.8 FG%, 77.6 FT%); Jonathan Richmond, G, 5-11/Sr. (11.8 pp, 2.7 apg).

Outlook: The Aggies have decent shooters and above-average quickness, but inconsistency in the paint caused this team's downfall last season. A&T brings in three freshmen who will have opportunities to make a difference on the front line. Depending on how well the rookies adjust, A&T could be a surprise team by mid-February. The Aggies are in good shape at guard.

Last league title: 1992 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1995.
Site: Greensboro, N.C. **Home court:** Ellis F. Corbett Sports Center (7,600).

6. FLORIDA A&M

Coach: Mickey Clayton (21-42, 3 years).
1997-98 record: 11-17. MEAC: 8-10/5th.
Key players: Kevin George, C/F, 6-10/Sr. (missed most of season with injury); Monroe Pippins, G, 6-3/Sr. (10.3 pp, 36.4 3-pt%, 2.2 spg, 19.3 mpg); Roderick Seay, G, 6-4/Sr. (10.0 pp, 47.7 FG%, 1.0 spg, 25.5 mpg).
Outlook: The Rattlers will miss 7-footer Jerome James, who was picked by the Kings in the NBA draft. Even so, FAMU figures to be quicker, which means the Rattlers will run the floor at every opportunity. In the middle, Kevin George is set to make his mark. He played in only 11 games last year after transferring from junior college. George is a smooth operator in the paint and should complement the skills of sharpshooting Monroe Pippins. Keep an eye on swingman Brian Johnson, a transfer from UC Irvine who was the 1996 Big West Rookie of the Year.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Tallahassee, Fla. **Home court:** Gaither Arena (3,365).

7. NORFOLK STATE

Coach: Mel Coleman (first year).
1997-98 record: 6-21.
Key players: Will Brooks, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (9.4 pp, 4.5 rpg, 1.7 spg, 27.2 mpg); Kevin Perry, G, 6-3/Sr. (14.7 pp, 39.7 3-pt%, 2.0 spg, 32.0 mpg); Damian Woolfolk, G, 6-5/Jr. (18.2 pp, 4.0 rpg, 76.6 FT%, 43.2 3-pt%, 1.8 spg, 36.1 mpg).
Outlook: New coach Mel Coleman and his assistants were signed to one-year contracts and will run the show on an interim basis. There were several times last season when the Spartans failed to play hard from start to finish. But this team has talent. Damian Woolfolk could be the MEAC's MVP this season. What Norfolk State needs is a true point guard, inside scoring punch and improved rebounding.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Norfolk, Va. **Home court:** Echols Arena (7,600).

8. DELAWARE STATE

Coach: Jimmy DuBose (9-18, 1 year).
1997-98 record: 9-18. MEAC: 7-11/6th.
Key players: Brian Butler, G, 6-5/Sr. (6.9 pp, 1.2 spg, 14.9 mpg); Barrington Clarke, F, 6-7/Sr. (9.7 pp, 4.1 rpg, 50.0 FG%, 1.6 spg, 22.3 mpg); Terrence Hood, G, 6-4/Sr. (14.8 pp, 34.7 mpg).
Outlook: The Hornets don't have much size, but they are athletic. Look for Terrence Hood to have a breakout season. Barrington Clarke is set to emerge as perhaps the league's most versatile player. Delaware State has good quickness, but rebounding could be this team's downfall. If the Hornets aren't able to hold their own on the boards, they won't be able to run the floor to take advantage of their speed.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Dover, Del. **Home court:** Memorial Hall (3,000).

9. HOWARD

Coach: Kirk Saulny (first year).
1997-98 record: 8-20. MEAC: 5-13/9th.
Key players: Ali Abdullah, G, 5-9/Soph. (9.2 pp, 5.0 apg); Jermaine Holliday, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.6 pp, 5.2 rpg); Melvin Watson, G, 6-5/Sr. (11.5 pp, 4.5 rpg).
Outlook: This is a ground-zero situation for all parties. New coach Kirk Saulny knows little about the returning players, and they know even less about him. Star forward Xavier Singletary wasn't expected to return after the Bison fired coach Mike McLeese, who was Singletary's high school coach. Ali Abdullah is set to establish himself as the league's premier point guard. Saulny previously served as an assistant at UNC Wilmington.
Last league title: 1992 (tie). **Last NCAA appearance:** 1992.
Site: Washington, D.C. **Home court:** Burr Gym (2,500).

10. MD.-EASTERN SHORE

Coach: Lonnie E. Williams (20-35, 2 years; 171-158 overall,

BY CRAIG T. GREENLEE
 Greensboro (N.C.) News & Record

ALL-MEAC

TARVIS JOHNSON, F, 6-8/219, Soph., Hampton.
 RASHEED SPARKS, F/G, 6-3/185, Sr., Morgan State.
 RAHEEM WALLER, C, 6-8/235, Jr., South Carolina State.
 ALI ABDULLAH, G, 5-9/170, Howard.
 DAMIAN WOOLFOLK, G, 6-5/210, Jr., Norfolk State.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

DAMIAN WOOLFOLK, G, Norfolk State.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

MIKE WAITRE, G, South Carolina State

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Torrey Farrington, Hampton.
Best rebounder: Raheem Waller, South Carolina State.
Best playmaker: Ali Abdullah, Howard.
Best defender: Tarvis Williams, Hampton.
Best leaper: Rasheed Sparks, Morgan State.
Most versatile: Barrington Clarke, Delaware State.
Most flamboyant: Damany Smith, Hampton.
Best pro prospect: Damian Woolfolk, Norfolk State.

10 years).
1997-98 record: 9-18. MEAC: 7-11/6th.
Key players: Joel Hoover, G, 6-0/Sr. (10.8 pp, 3.7 apg, 2.7 spg); Jeremy Jones, F, 6-8/Sr. (8.9 pp, 4.5 rpg, 50.0 FG%).
Outlook: Joel Hoover is one of the league's premier point guards and Jeremy Jones is a reliable rebounder. They'll need help in order for the Hawks to do damage. With only five returning players, it's imperative the newcomers blend in quickly. Transfers Edwin Colbert, Cedric Rawshaw, Benjamin Surpin and Kevin Wallace could make an immediate impact.
Last league title: 1974 (tie).
Last NCAA appearance: None.
Site: Princess Anne, Md. **Home court:** Tawes Gym (1,500).

11. BETHUNE-COOKMAN

Coach: Horace Broadnax (1-26, 1 year).
1997-98 record: 1-26. MEAC: 1-17/10th.
Key players: Freddie Cole, G, 6-3/Jr. (RS/foot); Johnny McClenton, G/F, 6-6/Sr. (13.1 pp, 4.3 rpg, 1.9 spg, 31.0 mpg); Valder Ned, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.2 pp, 5.7 rpg, 48.0 FG%, 26.5 mpg).
Outlook: Bethune has no where to go but up. The return of Freddie Cole, who missed last season with a foot injury, is a major plus. The Wildcats are blessed with exceptional quickness, which shows at the defensive end. Offense, though, is what needs to improve. The Wildcats lack size, so it means they need to shoot better from the outside. If this team gets consistently balanced scoring, look for Bethune to pull a few surprises.
Last league title: None. **Last NCAA appearance:** None.
Site: Daytona Beach, Fla. **Home court:** Moore Gym (3,000).

TSN

1. UNC ASHEVILLE

Coach: Eddie Biedenbach (37-19, 2 years; 66-70 overall, 5 years).

1997-98 record: 19-9. Big South: 11-1/1st.

Key players: Juelian Flowers, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (5.5 ppg, 35.2 3-pt.%, 15.9 mpg); Kevin Martin, F, 6-5/Sr. (13.4 ppg, 5.2 rpg, 49.8 FG%, 1.4 spg, 28.9 mpg); Mike Matthews, G, 6-2/Sr. (5.5 ppg, 37.3 3-pt.%, 77.9 FT%, 1.3 spg, 25.0 mpg).

Outlook: The Bulldogs won their first Big South regular-season title last year, but lost to Radford on a last-second shot in the tournament finals. Kevin Martin was the second-leading scorer last year and will be looked upon to lead the team. He joins Mike Matthews as the only player who saw significant time last year. The Bulldogs will have size in the post with 7-0 sophomore Adam Earnhardt and 7-2 redshirt freshman Jason Horton. The non-conference schedule is tough; it includes Syracuse, Tennessee, Arizona and Maryland.

Last league title: 1989.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Asheville, N.C. **Home court:** Justice Center (1,580).

2. RADFORD

Coach: Ron Bradley (121-80, 7 years; 217-131 overall, 12 years).

1997-98 record: 20-10. Big South: 10-2/2nd. Lost to Duke in NCAA South first round.

Key players: Leslie Ballard, G, 6-1/Sr. (11.5 ppg, 35.1 3-pt.%, 26.3 mpg); Ryan Charles, C, 6-10/Jr. (8.3 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 55.7 FG%, 18.3 mpg); Rian Everett, G, 6-0/Jr. (6.0 ppg, 38.6 3-pt.%, 4.3 apg, 1.3 spg, 29.6 mpg).

Outlook: Despite the loss of four seniors, the Highlanders should contend for their ninth consecutive winning season with eight lettermen and a team expected to be more athletic. After leading the conference in assists, Rian Everett must be more aggressive in creating shots for himself. Newcomers Lee Klag (6-11), Nosa Obasuyi (6-10) and Andrey Savtchenko (6-11) need to produce in the middle.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1997.

Site: Radford, Va. **Home court:** Dedmon Center (5,000).

3. CHARLESTON SOUTHERN

Coach: Tom Conrad (22-35, 2 years).

1997-98 record: 5-22. Big South: 2-10/7th.

Key players: Adam Larrick, G, 6-3/Sr. (15.4 ppg, 40.6 3-pt.%, 1.5 spg, 36.4 mpg); Vincent Mitchell, G, 6-3/Sr. (12.4 ppg, 1.1 spg, 33.0 mpg); Peter Van Rij, C, 6-10/Jr. (transfer/Fairfield).

Outlook: After making their first trip to the NCAA Tournament in 1997, the Buccaneers struggled last season. But with a year of experience for a plethora of freshman, Charleston Southern should be improved. Back are the top four scorers from last season's team, including Adam Larrick, who led the Bucs in scoring. Junior forward Marlin Parker may be the surprise of the conference. Charleston Southern has the talent but will have to improve on its 0-14 road record to have a chance at a return to the NCAA Tournament.

Last league title: 1997.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997.

Site: Charleston, S.C. **Home court:** CSU Fieldhouse (1,500).

4. COASTAL CAROLINA

Coach: Pete Strickland (first year).

1997-98 record: 8-19. Big South: 4-8/T5th.

Key players: Andrew Hinton, F, 6-8/Sr. (6.4 ppg, 18.4 mpg); Larry Roberts, F, 6-5/Sr. (5.9 ppg, 38.5 3-pt.%, 1.0 spg, 23.5 mpg); Marcus Stewart, C, 6-7/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 6.6 rpg, 25.2 mpg).

Outlook: New coach Pete Strickland inherits a team that lost its best player, guard Rodney Dupre'. Strickland was an assistant at Dayton and Old Dominion before being hired by Coastal Carolina, and a fresh outlook should help this team. The Chanticleers need to improve their defense, field-goal percentage and scoring offense—all of which ranked last in the conference last season. And they need to find a replacement for point guard Greg Smith.

Last league title: 1993.

Last NCAA appearance: 1993.

Site: Conway, S.C. **Home court:** Kimbel Gym (1,800).



To get to the NAAs for the first time since '94, Liberty needs a big year from Hopkins.

5. LIBERTY

Coach: Mel Hankinson (first year; 325-276 overall, 21 years).

1997-98 record: 11-17. Big South: 5-7/4th.

Key players: Jay Boykin, F, 6-5/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 41.9 3-pt.%, 23.4 mpg); Jeremy Day, C, 6-9/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 50.4 FG%, 18.3 mpg); Adam Hopkins, C, 6-10/Sr. (6.3 ppg, 47.2 FG%, 19.5 mpg).

Outlook: After a season in which it finished below .500 but beat Virginia, Liberty will have a new coach and a lot of young players. The Flames had the second-best defense in the conference last year, allowing teams an average of 68.9 points per game, but they return just one starter (Jeremy Day). Point guard Edward Marks needs a good season. There are eight newcomers, including three JC transfers. Without much experience, Liberty will stress rebounding and defense.

Last league title: 1994.

Last NCAA appearance: 1994.

Site: Lynchburg, Va. **Home court:** Vines Center (9,000).

6. WINTHROP

Coach: Greg Marshall (first year).

1997-98 record: 7-20. Big South: 4-8/T5th.

Key players: Heson Groves, F, 6-7/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 1.1 bpg, 31.5 mpg); Robbie Waldrop, G, 6-4/Soph. (9.2 ppg, 82.6 FT%, 16.2 mpg); Pierre Wooten, G, 6-3/Fr.

Outlook: New coach Greg Marshall inherits a team that returns just five lettermen. There are four newcomers, and point man Pierre Wooten may be the key. The lack of a proven post player will present a challenge. The tallest player on this year's team is 6-9 sophomore forward Owen Barnes, who sat out last year (Prop 48). The Eagles plan to offset their lack of size by using an up-tempo style.

Last league title: 1988.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Rock Hill, S.C. **Home court:** Winthrop Coliseum (6,100).

ELON

Coach: Mark Simons (51-87, 5 years; 146-189 overall, 12 years).

1997-98 record: 13-14 in Division II.

Key players: Joey Schwetz, G, 5-11/Jr. (8.3 ppg, 41.9 3-pt.%, 77.1 FT%, 1.2 spg, 29.0 mpg); Mike Thomas, F, 6-5/Sr. (7.8 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 1.1 spg, 25.0 mpg); Clint Walker, F, 6-7/Sr. (7.1 ppg, 6.8 rpg, 50.3 FG%, 1.3 spg, 21.0 mpg).

ALL-BIG SOUTH

ADAM EARNHARDT, C, 7-0/200, Soph., UNC Asheville.
RICH GIDDENS, F/G, 6-5/200, Soph., Maryland-Baltimore Co.
KEVIN MARTIN, F, 6-5/185, Sr., UNC Asheville.
LESLIE BALLARD, G, 6-1/185, Sr., Radford.
ADAM LARRICK, G, 6-3/160, Sr., Charleston Southern.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

KEVIN MARTIN, F, UNC Asheville.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

ANDREY SAVTCHENKO, C, Radford.

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Adam Larrick, Charleston Southern.

Best rebounder: Heson Groves, Winthrop.

Best playmaker: Rian Everett, Radford.

Best defender: Heson Groves, Winthrop.

Best leaper: Vincent Mitchell, Charleston Southern.

Most versatile: Marcus Stewart, Coastal Carolina.

Most flamboyant: none.

Best pro prospect: Rian Everett, Radford.

Outlook: The Fightin' Christians lost three starters from last season. Along with High Point, Elon won't officially join the Big South until next season. Until then, Elon will count on Mike Thomas and Clint Walker. Newcomer Brendon Rowell, a 6-3 off-guard, was the North Carolina Private School Player of the Year for Charlotte's Providence Day School. Andrew Toole, another freshman off-guard, also is expected to provide a boost this season.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Elon, N.C. **Home court:** Alumni Gym (2,000).

HIGH POINT

Coach: Jerry Steele (423-332, 26 years; 574-406 overall, 34 years).

1997-98 record: 12-13 in Division II.

Key players: Scotty Hall, F, 6-2/Sr. (13.8 ppg, 45.6 FG%, 37.5 3-pt.%, 1.1 spg, 30.9 mpg); Darien Horton, G, 6-0/Sr. (6.5 ppg, 35.1 3-pt.%, 29.1 mpg).

Outlook: After consecutive trips to the NCAA Division II National Tournament in 1996 and '97, High Point will find itself struggling with a Division I schedule. The Panthers, who officially join the Big South next season, will play a full conference schedule but aren't eligible for postseason play. They lost three starters from last season. High Point will count on Scotty Hall, who started every game last season. Freshman Valdas Kavkenas, a 6-8 forward, is the biggest addition; he is a member of the Lithuanian National Team.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: 1997 (Division II).

Site: High Point, N.C. **Home court:** Millis Athletic Center (1,750).

TSN

1. NAVY

Coach: Don DeVoe (99-73, 6 years; 427-301 overall, 25 years; 5-10 NCAA Tournament record).

1997-98 record: 19-11. Patriot: 10-2/T1st. Lost to North Carolina in NCAA East first round.

Key players: Sitapha Savane, F, 6-8/Jr. (5.4 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 1.3 bpg, 48.2 FG%, 16.9 mpg); Skip Victor, G, 6-2/Sr. (8.9 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 2.9 apg, 1.7 spg, 47.4 FG%, 74.5 FT%, 25.7 mpg); Josh Williams, C, 6-11/Sr. (6.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg, 1.2 bpg, 45.8 FG%, 15.4 mpg); Chris Williams, F, 6-4/Soph. (6.0 ppg, 2.8 rpg, 1.2 spg, 49.1 FG%, 13.8 mpg).

Outlook: Navy lost three of its top four scorers, but this year's edition will be more athletic than any Middies team in recent memory. You know Navy will play great defense; that's coach Don DeVoe's calling card. Skip Victor, who started to shine once he moved from the point to the wing last December, will make a serious run at conference player of the year honors, and the frontcourt is big and mobile. Look out for Sitapha Savane. If sophomore Reggie Skipworth can get it done at point guard, the Middies will stamp their NCAA tourney ticket for the third consecutive season.

Last league title: 1998.

Last time didn't make NCAA field: 1996.

Site: Annapolis, Md. **Home court:** Alumni Hall (5,710).

2. LAFAYETTE

Coach: Fran O'Hanlon (37-46, 3 years).

1997-98 record: 19-9. Patriot: 10-2/T1st.

Key players: Tim Bieg, G, 5-11/Soph. (5.2 ppg, 2.0 rpg, 2.0 apg, 40.4 FG%, 72.5 FT%, 22.1 mpg); Ted Cole, F, 6-6/Sr. (5.8 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 45.8 FG%, 63.0 FT%, 20.0 mpg); Brian Ehlers, G, 6-4/Jr. (16.3 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 2.7 apg, 1.1 spg, 42.8 FG%, 28.6 3PT%, 83.8 FT%, 29.8 mpg); Tyson Whitfield, F, 6-4/Soph. (9.6 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 1.3 spg, 40.3 FG%, 36.5 3PT%, 75.0 FT%, 23.5 mpg).

Outlook: Talk about a way to ruin your coach's summer. While playing a pickup game at Seton Hall's basketball camp, 6-11 senior center Stefan Ciosici tore his ACL and is done for the season. Although 10 other contributors from last year's team return, Ciosici was the man expected to lift Lafayette to its first NCAA appearance since 1957. It still might happen, but the pressure now is on all-league guard Brian Ehlers, who'll need some scoring help from Tyson Whitfield, Ted Cole and Dave Klaus, heretofore role players. Hofstra transfer Frank Barr is 6-11, but he's only 215 pounds and lacks Ciosici's scoring ability.

Last league title: 1998.

Last NCAA appearance: 1957.

Site: Easton, Pa. **Home court:** Kirby Field House (3,500).

3. BUCKNELL

Coach: Pat Flannery (61-51, 4 years; 156-94 overall, 9 years).

1997-98 record: 13-15. Patriot: 8-4/3rd.

Key players: Dan Bowen, F/C, 6-8/Jr. (8.8 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 56.6 FG%, 68.7 FT%, 29.0 mpg); Martin Gilliard, F, 6-4/Sr. (12.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 1.3 bpg, 47.9 FG%, 40.3 3PT%, 63.2 FT%, 31.7 mpg); Valter Karavanic, F, 6-7/Jr. (9.2 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 44.2 FG%, 81.6 FT%, 27.6 mpg); Brian Muckle, G, 6-6/Jr. (4.6 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 1.5 apg, 50.5 FG%, 62.5 FT%, 19.0 mpg).

Outlook: The Bison have a shot at the title, provided they find a go-to guy to replace scoring machine J.R. Holden. Martin Gilliard could be the man, but there aren't too many candidates after him. Perhaps Valter Karavanic, who has a good shooting touch, will emerge. Or Dan Bowen, who has good athletic skills for a big guy and can get up and down the floor well, will step forward. Bucknell has great depth and solid rebounding, but there is a gap at the point, where Holden did it all. The job could go to senior Willie Callahan, who has played a lot at off-guard, or sophomore Nyambi Nyambi, who ran the JV team last year.

Last league title: 1989.

Last NCAA appearance: 1989.

Site: Lewisburg, Pa. **Home court:** Davis Gym (2,300).

4. HOLY CROSS

Coach: Bill Raynor (47-63, 4 years).

1997-98 record: 7-20. Patriot: 3-9/6th.

Key players: Jared Curry, F, 6-5/Soph. (7.7 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 2.1 apg, 42.7 FG%, 51.4 FT%, 27.9 mpg); John Hightower, G, 6-0/Sr. (11.1 ppg, 3.5 rpg, 3.7 apg, 44.1 FG%, 68.8 FT%, 35.6 mpg); James Stowers, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (8.2 ppg, 1.5 rpg, 39.5 FG%, 37.4 3PT%, 88.4 FT%, 19.4 mpg); Juan Piques, F, 6-6/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 46.8 FG%, 68.8 FT%, 22.7 mpg).

Outlook: A year of growth for the Crusaders' youngsters in 1997-98 should pay off this season—provided Holy Cross can find itself a pivot presence. There is plenty of depth and outside scoring available, but the loss of Jon Kerr will hurt on the scoreboard and the backboards. Sharpshooter James Stowers and freshman guard Ryan Serravalle will be well-fed by point man John Hightower. If 6-8 sophomore Colin Boddicker or newcomers Dekker McKeever and Patrick Whearty—each part of the Holy Cross' first scholarship class since 1990-91—can step up, the Crusaders might challenge for a top-three spot.

Last league title: 1993.

Last NCAA appearance: 1993.

Site: Worcester, Mass. **Home court:** Hart Center (3,600).

5. LEHIGH

Coach: Sal Montesana (11-43, 2 years; 146-154 overall, 11 years).

1997-98 record: 10-17. Patriot: 4-8/5th.

Key players: Brett Eppehimer, G, 5-11/Sr. (24.7 ppg, 2.2 rpg, 1.7 spg, 40.0 FG%, 39.8 3PT%, 87.7 FT%, 34.6 mpg); Tiwaun Hawkins, G, 6-1/Soph. (2.8 ppg, 2.5 rpg, 4.5 apg, 35.4 FG%, 60.6 FT%, 25.0 mpg); Jared Hess, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (10.8 ppg, 3.9 rpg, 43.1 FG%, 72.0 FT%, 27.8 mpg); Fido Willybiro, F, 6-6/Jr. (8.4 ppg, 6.7 rpg, 1.0 spg, 42.5 FG%, 53.8 FT%, 25.8 mpg).

Outlook: There's no doubt about the main man on this team. If there is a play in the Lehigh game plan for someone other than Brett Eppehimer, the rest of the league's coaches probably would be shocked. Only Bucknell's J.R. Holden came close to taking as many shots as Eppehimer (488) did, but no one can argue with the results. The key this season is how much help he gets. Jared Hess is a fine complementary scorer to Eppehimer and has some shooting range, and forwards Fido Willybiro and Peter Delea are productive inside. For Lehigh to challenge the top three teams in the conference, it must improve its defense; foes shot 47 percent from the floor last season.

Last league title: 1988 (East Coast).

Last NCAA appearance: 1988.

Site: Bethlehem, Pa. **Home court:** Stabler Arena (5,600).

6. COLGATE

Coach: Emmett Davis (10-18 year).

1997-98 record: 10-18. Patriot: 5-7/4th.

Key players: Chester Felts, G, 6-3/Sr. (10.5 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 3.3 apg, 42.7 FG%, 78.9 FT%, 29.0 mpg); Ben Wandtke, F/C, 6-6/Sr. (11.9 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 43.7 FG%, 79.0 FT%, 28.8 mpg); Chad Wiswall, F, 6-5/Sr. (11.8 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 1.0 bpg, 41.5 FG%, 64.8 FT%, 24.6 mpg).

Outlook: If the Red Raiders can shoot the ball better than last season (41.4 percent) and hit the boards with more vigor, they should be able to flirt with a .500 record in league play. This is an experienced team, although no one looks to be a star. Ben Wandtke is a productive inside-outside player with a good shot, and the backcourt of Chester Felts and Mike Tilley should be steady and stingy. Colgate coaches are high on 6-5 freshman Rico Cabrera; he'll help upgrade the team's athletic profile.

Last league title: 1996 (tie).

BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

Free-lance writer

ALL-PATRIOT

BRIAN EHLERS, F/G, 6-4/195, Jr., Lafayette.
MARTIN GILLIARD, F/G, 6-4/200, Sr., Bucknell.
BEN WANDTKE, F/C, 6-6/220, Sr., Colgate.
BRETT EPPEHIMER, G, 5-11/183, Sr., Lehigh.
SKIP VICTOR, G, 6-2/198, Sr., Navy.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BRETT EPPEHIMER, G, Lehigh.



NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

RYAN SERRAVALLE, G, Holy Cross.

HONOR ROLL

Best shooter: Brett Eppehimer, Lehigh.

Best rebounder: Ben Wandtke, Colgate.

Best playmaker: Tiwaun Hawkins, Lehigh.

Best defender: Skip Victor, Navy.

Best leaper: Chad Wiswall, Colgate.

Most versatile: Brian Ehlers, Lafayette.

Most flamboyant: Skip Victor, Navy.

Best pro prospect: none.

Last NCAA appearance: 1996.

Site: Hamilton, N.Y. **Home court:** Cotterell Court (3,100).

7. ARMY

Coach: Pat Harris (8-19, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 8-19. Patriot: 2-10/7th.

Key players: Seth Barrett, F, 6-5/Soph. (7.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 45.5 FG%, 51.0 FT%, 23.1 mpg); Joe Clark, G/F, 6-5/Soph. (8.4 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 2.0 apg, 37.4 FG%, 39.1 3PT%, 54.5 FT%, 29.9 mpg); Babe Kwasniak, G, 6-0/Sr. (9.1 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 4.0 apg, 35.3 FG%, 33.8 3PT%, 81.3 FT%, 34.3 mpg); George Tatum, G-F, 6-2/Sr. (13.1 ppg, 4.4 rpg, 2.8 apg, 1.5 spg, 35.8 FG%, 73.6 FT%, 26.4 mpg).

Outlook: Things are brighter in West Point than they have been for a while, but Cadets fans should be cautioned against planning for the postseason. Army returns four starters and will get a boost from the return of senior guard Jamie Uptgraft, who averaged 10.1 ppg in 1996-97 before spending a year out of the Academy. George Tatum is a productive scorer who needs to get better from long range, and Babe Kwasniak is a solid point man. Joe Clark showed the ability to shoot well from the outside during his debut last season. A deep freshman class, particularly forward Jonte Harrell, should help. But the Cadets are small, in serious need of a defensive upgrade and a long, long way from contention.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: West Point, N.Y. **Home court:** Christl Arena (5,043).

TSN

INDEPENDENTS

BELMONT

Coach: Rick Byrd (284-115, 12 years; 376-170, 17 years).
1997-98 record: 9-18.

Key players: Tyrus Doss, G, 6-2/Soph. (6.7 ppg, 75.0 FT%, 25.6 mpg); Dougie Webb, G, 6-2/Jr. (9.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 47.4 FG%, 70.5 FT%, 42.9 3-pt%, 1.6 spg, 30.6 mpg); Ryan Steger, F, 6-4/Jr. (12.6 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 81.0 FT%, 40.4 3-pt%, 33.0 mpg); Jay Lannin, F, 6-5/Soph. (12.3 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 74.0 FT%, 28.0 mpg).

Outlook: The Bruins, heading into their second season in Division I, are a perimeter-oriented bunch; there are only three players taller than 6-6 on the roster. Ryan Lannin and Jay Steger are effective outside shooters, and Steger also is the leading returning assist man.

Jeremy Kees, a 6-8 junior, and especially Jason Lathrem, a 6-7, 265-pound junior, need to do some dirty work inside as the Bruins look to improve upon their poor rebounding (-4 per game last season). There are only 11 home games, and six of those—in fact, the last six games of the season—are in February, which means the Bruins will be on the road a lot in November, December and January.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Nashville. **Home court:** Striplin Gym (2,500).

TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN

Coach: Delray Brooks (3-24, 1 year).

1997-98 record: 3-24. Sun Belt: 3-15/10th.

Key players: Larry Jackson, G/F, 6-5/Jr. (17.3 ppg, 5.7

ppg, 1.8 spg); Matt Palmquist, C, 6-9/Jr. (6.7 ppg, 56.3 FG%); Lalo Rios, G, 5-10/Sr. (9.2 ppg, 4.7 apg, 2.3 spg).

Outlook: The Broncos, who have left the Sun Belt Conference, have just four lettermen returning, and coach Delray Brooks is counting on a big crop of newcomers to help turn the program around. Brooks has two four-year transfers and signed seven freshmen; he eschewed the traditional quick fix of JC transfers. Much of the scoring load will fall to Larry Jackson, the only returning double-figure scorer. Five of the freshmen are inside players, and they must come through on the boards; UTPA was outrebounded by an astounding 13.6 per game last season. The Broncos also must learn to play some defense: Foes shot an otherworldly 54.8 percent from the field last season.

Last league title: None.

Last NCAA appearance: None.

Site: Edinburg, Texas. **Home court:** UTPA Field House (5,000).

TSN

1997-98 LEAGUE STANDINGS

America East Conference

	CONFERENCE	ALL GAMES
	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Delaware	12 6 .667	20 10 .667
Boston U.	12 6 .667	19 11 .633
Hofstra	11 7 .611	19 12 .613
Vermont	11 7 .611	15 12 .556
Hartford	10 8 .556	13 15 .464
Drexel	9 9 .500	14 14 .500
Northeastern	6 12 .333	10 17 .370
New Hampshire	4 14 .222	8 20 .286
Towson	4 14 .222	7 20 .259
Maine		

Atlantic Coast Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Duke	15 1 .938	32 4 .889
y-North Carolina	13 3 .813	34 4 .895
Maryland	10 6 .625	21 11 .656
Clemson	7 9 .438	18 14 .563
Wake Forest	7 9 .438	16 14 .533
Georgia Tech	6 10 .375	20 13 .606
Florida St.	6 10 .375	18 14 .563
N.C. State	5 11 .313	17 15 .531
Virginia	3 13 .188	11 19 .367

Atlantic 10 Conference / East

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Temple	13 3 .813	21 9 .700
Rhode Island	12 4 .750	25 9 .735
Massachusetts	12 4 .750	21 11 .656
St. Bonaventure	6 10 .375	17 15 .531
St. Joseph's	3 13 .188	11 19 .393
Fordham	2 14 .125	6 21 .222

West

xy-Xavier	11 5 .688	22 8 .733
George Wash.	11 5 .688	24 9 .727
Dayton	11 5 .688	21 12 .636
Virginia Tech	5 11 .313	11 19 .367
Duquesne	5 11 .313	9 18 .333
La Salle	5 11 .313	9 18 .333

Big East Conference / Big East 6

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Connecticut	15 3 .833	32 5 .865
St. John's	13 5 .722	22 10 .688
West Virginia	11 7 .611	24 9 .727
Villanova	8 10 .444	12 17 .414
Notre Dame	7 11 .389	13 14 .481
Boston College	6 12 .333	15 16 .484

Big East 7

x-Syracuse	12 6 .667	26 9 .743
Miami	11 7 .611	18 10 .643
Seton Hall	9 9 .500	15 15 .500
Providence	7 11 .389	13 16 .449
Georgetown	6 12 .333	16 15 .516
Rutgers	6 12 .333	14 15 .483
Pittsburgh	6 12 .333	11 16 .407

Big Sky Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-N. Arizona	13 3 .813	21 8 .724
Weber St.	12 4 .750	14 13 .519
E. Washington	10 6 .625	16 11 .593
Portland St.	10 6 .625	15 12 .556
Montana St.	9 7 .563	19 11 .633
Montana	9 7 .563	16 14 .533
CS Northridge	7 9 .438	12 16 .429
Idaho St.	2 14 .125	6 20 .231
Sacramento St.	0 16 .000	1 25 .038

Big South Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-N.C.-Asheville	11 1 .917	19 9 .679
y-Radford	10 2 .833	20 10 .667
Mid.-Balt. County	6 5 .500	14 14 .500
Liberty	5 7 .417	11 17 .393
Coast Carolina	4 8 .333	8 19 .296
Winthrop	4 8 .333	7 20 .259
Charleston Southern	2 10 .167	5 22 .185

Big Ten Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Michigan St.	13 3 .813	22 8 .733
Illinois	13 3 .813	23 10 .697
Purdue	12 4 .750	28 8 .778
y-Michigan	11 5 .688	25 9 .735
Iowa	9 7 .563	20 11 .645
Indiana	9 7 .563	20 12 .625
Penn St.	8 8 .500	18 14 .563
Minnesota	6 10 .375	20 15 .571
Wisconsin	3 13 .188	12 19 .387
Northwestern	3 13 .188	10 17 .370
Ohio St.	1 15 .063	8 22 .267

Big 12 Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Kansas	15 1 .938	35 4 .897
Oklahoma St.	11 5 .688	22 7 .759
Oklahoma	11 5 .688	22 11 .667
Nebraska	10 6 .625	20 12 .625
Missouri	8 8 .500	17 15 .531
Baylor	8 8 .500	14 14 .500
Kansas St.	7 9 .438	17 12 .586
Colorado	7 9 .438	13 14 .481
Texas Tech	7 9 .438	13 14 .481
Texas	6 10 .375	14 17 .452
Louis St.	5 11 .313	12 18 .400
Texas A&M	1 15 .063	7 20 .259

Big West Conference / East

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Utah St.	13 3 .813	25 8 .758
Nevada	11 5 .688	16 12 .571
Boise St.	9 7 .563	17 13 .567
Idaho	9 7 .563	15 12 .556
New Mex. St.	8 8 .500	18 12 .600
North Texas	4 12 .250	5 21 .192

West

x-Pacific	14 2 .875	24 10 .706
Cal Poly-SLO	7 9 .438	14 14 .500
Cal St.-Fullerton	6 10 .375	12 16 .429
UC Irvine	6 10 .375	9 18 .333
Long Beach St.	5 11 .313	10 19 .345
UC Santa Barb.	4 12 .250	7 19 .269

Colonial Athletic Association

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-N.C.-Williamson	13 3 .813	20 11 .645
William & Mary	13 3 .813	20 7 .741
y-Richmond	12 4 .750	23 8 .742
Old Dominion	8 8 .500	12 16 .429
James Madison	6 10 .375	11 16 .407
George Mason	6 10 .375	9 18 .333
American U.	5 11 .313	10 17 .370
Eastern U.	5 11 .313	9 19 .321
VCU	4 12 .250	9 19 .321

Conference USA / America

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Cincinnati	14 2 .875	27 6 .818
N.C. Charlotte	13 3 .813	20 11 .645
Saint Louis	11 5 .688	22 11 .667
Marquette	8 8 .500	20 11 .645
Louisville	5 11 .313	12 20 .375
DePaul	3 13 .188	7 23 .233

National

x-Memphis	12 4 .750	17 12 .586
Ala.-Birm.	10 6 .625	21 12 .636
Southern Miss	9 7 .563	22 11 .667
South Florida	7 9 .438	17 13 .567
Houston	2 14 .125	9 20 .310
Tulane	2 14 .125	7 22 .241

Ivy League

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Princeton	14 0 .000	27 2 .931
Penn	10 4 .714	17 12 .586
Yale	7 7 .500	12 14 .462
Harvard	6 8 .429	13 13 .500
Columbia	6 8 .429	11 15 .423
Cornell	6 8 .429	9 17 .346
Dartmouth	4 10 .286	7 19 .269
Brown	3 11 .214	6 20 .231

Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Iona	15 3 .833	27 6 .818
Rider	12 6 .667	18 10 .643
Siena	10 8 .556	17 12 .586
Niagara	10 8 .556	14 13 .519
Canisius	9 9 .500	13 14 .481
Loyola, Md.	9 9 .500	12 16 .429
Fairfield	7 11 .389	12 15 .444
Manhattan	7 11 .389	12 17 .414
Marist	7 11 .389	11 17 .393
St. Peter's	4 14 .222	8 19 .296

Mid-American Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Akron	13 5 .722	17 10 .630
Miami, Ohio	9 9 .500	17 12 .586
Kent	9 9 .500	13 17 .433
Marshall	7 11 .389	11 16 .407
Bowling Green	7 11 .389	10 16 .385
Ohio U.	3 15 .167	5 21 .192

West

x-Ball St.	14 4 .778	21 8 .724
W. Michigan	14 4 .778	21 8 .724
E. Michigan	13 5 .722	20 10 .667
Toledo	10 8 .556	15 12 .556
N. Illinois	6 12 .333	10 16 .385
Cent. Michigan	3 15 .167	5 21 .192

Mid-Central Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Valparaiso	13 3 .813	23 10 .697
Oral Roberts	12 4 .750	19 12 .613
Youngstown St.	11 5 .688	20 9 .690
W. Illinois	11 5 .688	16 11 .593
Buffalo	9 7 .563	15 13 .536
Mo.-Kansas City	7 9 .438	9 18 .333
S. Utah	4 12 .250	7 20 .259
NE Illinois	3 13 .188	6 19 .240
z-Chicago St.	2 14 .125	2 25 .074

Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Coppin St.	17 1 .944	21 8 .724
y-S. Carolina St.	16 2 .889	22 8 .724
Hampton U.	11 7 .611	14 12 .538
Morgan St.	11 7 .611	12 16 .429
Florida A&M	8 10 .444	11 17 .393
Delaware St.	7 11 .389	9 18 .333
Mid.-E. Shore	7 11 .389	9 18 .333
N. Caro A&T	7 11 .389	8 19 .296
Howard U.	5 13 .278	8 20 .286
Beth.-Cook	1 17 .056	1 26 .037
z-Norfolk St.	0 0 .000	6 21 .222

Midwestern Collegiate Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
x-Detroit	12 2 .857	25 6 .806
Ill.-Chicago	12 2 .857	22 6 .786
y-Butler	8 6 .571	22 11 .667
Wis.-G.B.	7 7 .500	17 12 .586
Loyola, Ill.	6 8 .429	15 15 .500
Cleveland St.	6 8 .429	12 15 .444
Wright St.	3 11 .214	10 18 .357
Wis.-Milwaukee	2 12 .143	3 24 .111

Missouri Valley Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Illinois St.	16 2 .889	25 6 .806
Creighton	12 6 .667	18 10 .643
Wichita St.	11 7 .611	16 15 .516
SW Mo. St.	11 7 .611	16 15 .500
Indiana St.	10 8 .556	16 11 .593
Bradley	9 9 .500	15 14 .517
Evansville	9 9 .500	15 15 .500
S. Illinois	8 10 .444	14 16 .467
N. Iowa	4 14 .222	10 17 .370
Drake	0 18 .000	3 24 .111

Northeast Conference

	W L Pct.	W L Pct.
xy-Nicholls St.	15 1 .938	19 10 .655
SW Texas St.	10 6 .625	17 11 .607
Tex.-S. Antonio	10 6 .625	16 11 .593
NW Louisiana	10 6 .625	13 14 .481
NE Louisiana	8 8 .500	13 16 .444
Tex.-Arlington	8 8 .500	13 16 .444
Sam Hou. St.	7 9 .438	9 17 .346

W L Pct. W L Pct.

St. Mary's	8 8 .500	13 15 .464
Wagner	7 9 .438	13 16 .444
Robert Morris	4 12 .250	8 19 .296
Cent. Conn.	3 13 .188	4 22 .154
Monmouth	3 13 .188	4 23 .148

Ohio Valley Conference

	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
xy-Murray St.	16	2	.889	29	4	.879
Illinois	13	5	.722	16	11	.593
Middle Tenn.	12	6	.667	19	9	.679
Austin Peay	11	7	.611	17	11	.607
SE Missouri	10	8	.556	14	13	.519
Tennessee St.	8	10	.444	13	16	.444
E. Kentucky	8	10	.444	10	17	.370
Tenn. Tech	5	13	.278	9	21	.303
Tenn.-Martin	5	13	.278	7	20	.256
Morehead St.	2	16	.111	3	23	.115

TOP 10

1. Kentucky Wesleyan

The Panthers return the bulk of their national runner-up squad, including four starters. Talented newcomers make this a dangerous team.

2. Cal State Bakersfield

A perennial national power, the Roadrunners received an influx of new talent to support their returning veterans.

3. Delta State (Miss.)

The South Region champions, 27-4 last season, have one of the best players in the country in senior forward Chris Sykes.

4. UC Davis

The defending national champions have a new coach, but return three of their top five scorers from last season.

5. Southern Indiana

A mix of veterans and newcomers will help the Screaming Eagles be a force in the Great Lakes Region.

6. Virginia Union

Backcourt play will be a strength for the Panthers, who welcome back five of their top six scorers.

7. Fairmont State (W.Va.)

Youth turns to experience for the Falcons, who won the East Region and reached the Elite Eight a year ago without a senior on the roster.

8. South Dakota State

The Jackrabbits were 26-3 last season, but must fill a vacant center position and add depth up front this year.

9. West Texas A&M

The top team in the South Central Region, and two of the top six scorers return from the Buffaloes' 26-5 Elite Eight team.

10. New Hampshire College

The Penmen have an experienced backcourt and will be shooting for their eighth consecutive tournament appearance.

PRESEASON ALL-AMERICAN TEAM

FIRST TEAM

C Antonio Garcia	Kentucky Wesleyan	6-8	Sr.
F Antvaine Smith	St. Paul's (Va.)	6-7	Sr.
F Chris Sykes	Delta State (Miss.)	6-6	Sr.
G Dante Ross	UC Davis	5-9	Sr.
G Titus Warmesley	Montana St.-Billings	5-11	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

F Lee Farrior	Longwood (Va.)	6-3	Jr.
F Milosh Pujo	Lewis (Ill.)	6-8	Sr.
C Eric Strand	Nebraska-Kearney	6-9	Sr.
G Oscar Gonzalez	Pittsburg State (Kan.)	6-0	Sr.
G Roland Miller	East Central Oklahoma	6-3	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Antonio Garcia, Kentucky Wesleyan

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Ron Selleaze, Cal State Bakersfield

TOP 5 GAMES TO WATCH

1. Southern Indiana at Kentucky Wesleyan, February 18.
2. Cal State Bakersfield at UC Davis, January 9.
3. Stonehill at New Hampshire College, November 24.
4. Central Arkansas at Delta State, February 4.
5. South Dakota State at Northern State, December 12.

1998 PLAYOFF RESULTS

FIRST ROUND

Pittsburg (Kan.) State 85, Northwest Missouri State 70
Central Oklahoma 107, Texas A&M Commerce 103
Cal State Los Angeles 58, Grand Canyon (Ariz.) 53
Seattle Pacific 82, Montana State-Billings 64
Assumption (Mass.) 87, Adelphi (N.Y.) 63
New Hampshire College 89, Dowling (N.Y.) 62
Edinboro (Pa.) 79, California (Pa.) 78
Pittsburgh-Johnstown 80, Queens (N.Y.) 72
Metropolitan State (S.D.) 69, Fort Hays (Kan.) 61
Nebraska-Kearney 77, Southern Colorado 74
South Carolina-Spartanburg 95, Johnson C. Smith (N.C.) 67
South Carolina-Aiken 74, Columbus State (Ga.) 65
Albany State (Ga.) 86, Florida Southern 80
West Georgia 77, Fort Valley State (Ga.) 74
Michigan Tech 76, Lewis (Ill.) 73
Northern Kentucky 78, Ferris State (Mo.) 63

SECOND ROUND

West Texas A&M 90, Pittsburg State 79
Central Oklahoma 109, Missouri Western State 101
UC Davis 53, Cal State Los Angeles 51
Seattle Pacific 62, Cal State Bakersfield 60
St. Rose 87, Assumption 80
Stonehill 78, New Hampshire College 67 (OT)
Salem-Teikyo 91, Edinboro 83
Fairmont State 75, Pittsburgh-Johnstown 74
South Dakota State 93, Metropolitan State 79
Northern State 92, Nebraska-Kearney 86

Virginia Union 91, South Carolina-Spartanburg 61
Catawba 82, South Carolina-Aiken 76
Delta State 84, Albany State 62
Lynn 104, West Georgia 92
Kentucky Wesleyan 78, Michigan Tech 68
Southern Indiana 81, Northern Kentucky 66

THIRD ROUND

West Texas A&M 105, Central Oklahoma 101
UC Davis 80, Seattle Pacific 52
St. Rose 97, Stonehill 87 (2OT)
Fairmont State 79, Salem-Teikyo 78
Northern State 88, South Dakota State 82
Virginia Union 70, Catawba 58
Delta State 63, Lynn 59 (OT)
Kentucky Wesleyan 98, Southern Indiana 79

REGIONAL FINALS

UC Davis 63, West Texas State 55
St. Rose 77, Fairmont State 73 (OT)
Virginia Union 67, Northern State 63
Kentucky Wesleyan 76, Delta State 68

NATIONAL SEMIFINALS

UC Davis 88, St. Rose 76
Kentucky Wesleyan 80, Virginia Union 72

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

UC Davis 83, Kentucky Wesleyan 77

Division III Report

TOP 10

1. Wisconsin-Platteville

The defending national champions have a strong returning cast, a talented group of recruits and the best defense in the country.

2. Hope (Mich.)

Always a Division III national power, the Flying Dutchmen will make a run at their third title game in four seasons.

3. Wilkes (Pa.)

The Colonels lost only three seniors from last year's 26-5 team, which reached the Final Four.

4. Hampden-Sydney (Va.)

A talented trio of juniors leads the Tigers, who should be the top team in the South Region.

5. Illinois Wesleyan

The Titans have one of the best backcourts in the country, but need replacements up front to advance in the tournament.

6. Lebanon Valley (Pa.)

The Flying Dutchmen have all but one player back on the roster from a year ago, including All-American Andy Panko.

7. Gustavus Adolphus (Minn.). A solid front line anchors the Golden Gusties, who were 26-4 last season.

8. Hunter (N.Y.)

The Hawks made a Cinderella run to the national quarterfinals last year and have most everyone back from a 28-2 team.

9. Williams (Mass.)

The Ephs lost the national player of the year, but welcome back two starters and many reserves from its Final Four team.

10. Catholic (D.C.)

The Cardinals return 13 lettermen, including four starters, from a 25-4 team.

PRESEASON ALL-AMERICAN TEAM

FIRST TEAM

C Ryan Gorman	Wooster	6-6	Sr.
F Andy Panko	Lebanon Valley	6-8	Sr.
F Mike Schantz	Hamilton	6-4	Sr.
G Darrell Lewis	Lincoln	6-3	Sr.
G Jeremy Thompson	Ohio Northern	6-2	Jr.

SECOND TEAM

F Adam Doll	Simpson	6-6	Sr.
F Deveen George	Augsburg	6-4	Sr.
C Chris Wall	Oglethorpe	6-6	Sr.
G Adam DeChristopher	Plymouth St.	6-1	Sr.
G Henry Shannon	Maryville (Mo.)	6-3	Sr.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Andy Panko, Lebanon Valley

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Cory Gibson, Elmhurst (Ill.)

TOP 5 GAMES TO WATCH

1. Calvin at Hope, February 10.
2. Wis.-Whitewater at Wisconsin-Platteville, January 30.
3. Lebanon Valley at Franklin & Marshall, January 18.
4. Williams at Springfield, February 9.
5. Wittenberg at Wooster, January 30.

1998 PLAYOFF RESULTS

FIRST ROUND

Williams (Mass.) 89, Trinity (Conn.) 63
Hamilton (N.Y.) 102, Geneseo (N.Y.) 68
Salem State (Mass.) 86, Mass.-Dartmouth 78 (OT)
Nazareth (N.Y.) 81, Brockport State (N.Y.) 78
Franklin (Ind.) 76, Ripon (Wis.) 73
Gustavus-Adolphus (Minn.) 78, Augsburg (Minn.) 70
Wabash (Ind.) 87, Aurora (Ill.) 80
Wisconsin-Oshkosh 93, Ponona-Pitzer 71
Jersey City (N.J.) 71, New York U. 58
Johns Hopkins (Md.) 87, FDU-Madison (N.J.) 47
Rowan (N.J.) 70, Merchant Marine 49
Scranton (Pa.) 77, Muhlenberg (Pa.) 61
Mississippi College 60, Sewanee 54
Allegheny (Pa.) 97, Baldwin-Wallace 88
Trinity (Tex.) 60, Randolph-Macon 55
John Carroll (Ohio) 72, Albion (Mich.) 50

SECOND ROUND

Williams 82, Springfield (Mass.) 75
Hamilton 87, St. John Fisher 72
Connecticut College 93, Salem State 84
St. Lawrence (N.Y.) 96, Nazareth 75
Illinois Wesleyan 95, Franklin 92 (OT)
Gustavus Adolphus 65, Nebraska Wesleyan 51
Chicago 67, Wabash 62
Wisconsin-Platteville 69, Wisconsin-Oshkosh 59
Hunter (N.Y.) 65, Jersey City 60
Catholic (D.C.) 67, Johns Hopkins 62
Rowan (N.J.) 81, College of New Jersey 58

Wilkes (Pa.) 59, Scranton 57
Christopher Newport 78, Mississippi 67
Hope (Mich.) 80, Allegheny 66
Hampden-Sydney 76, Trinity 62
John Carroll 78, Wooster 59

THIRD ROUND

Williams 90, Hamilton 69
St. Lawrence 94, Connecticut Col. 77
Gustavus Adolphus 67, Illinois Wesleyan 61
Wisconsin-Platteville 78, Chicago 63
Hunter 84, Catholic 82 (2 OT)
Wilkes 83, Rowan 80 (2 OT)
Hope 81, Christopher Newport 64
John Carroll 77, Hampden-Sydney 71

REGIONAL FINALS

Williams 100, St. Lawrence 82
Wisconsin-Platteville 78, Gustavus Adolphus 71
Wilkes 58, Hunter 55
Hope 84, John Carroll 66

NATIONAL SEMIFINALS

Wisconsin-Platteville 82, Williams 68
Hope 81, Wilkes 61

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Wisconsin-Platteville 63, Hope 56

the usual Suspects

BY MILTON KENT



Parity is in swing, as anyone who followed the '98 NCAA tourney can attest. Does that make the '99 national title an open chase? Not quite. Here's a look at the runaway favorites

In theory, anything is possible.

Jimmy Johnson's hair could move.

Pauly Shore could make a good movie.

The Tennessee women could be denied a fourth consecutive national championship.

OK, would you like to try for two out of three?

Truth is, there probably isn't very much in this realm to stop the Lady Vols from collecting a record fourth title in a row, which would be their seventh in the past 12 years, and pretty much crushing whatever doubt might remain about their status as the greatest team in women's basketball history.

How tough will it be to beat the Lady Vols? Consider that in last year's title march, Tennessee won 28 of its 39 games by at least 20 points and finished with an average victory margin of just over 30 points a game. Here's the scary part: Coach Pat Summitt has all five starters back from the team that won more games in a regular season than any in women's history, with the only losses being oft-injured guard Laurie Milligan and forward Brynne Laxton, an honor student focusing on her major. And the signees (6-5 Michelle Snow and 6-3 Shalon Pillow) appear to fill what little weakness Tennessee had—its post game.

In other words, if the Lady Vols are on your schedule, bring a lunch. It's going to be a long day.

"I'm a good Catholic boy and I'm going to have a priest on the bench when we play them," says Auburn coach Joe Ciampi, whose Tigers lost by a respectable 16 in Knoxville last winter.

You have to go all the way back to March 2, 1997, and the semifinals of the SEC Tournament for the last time Tennessee lost. The Lady Vols fell, 61-59, to Auburn as they squandered a nine-point lead in the last 10 minutes.

Ciampi said his team shot well that night and took care of the ball better than they had in a while against Tennessee. Defensively, the Tigers sloughed off the perimeter and dared Tennessee to win from outside.

That type of thinking now is folly, as the Lady Vols, with sophomores Tamika Catchings and Semeka Randall, along with Chamique Holdsclaw, have the nation's most potent offense. Catchings, a 6-1 forward and consensus national freshman of the year, surpassed Holdsclaw's freshman scoring record and demonstrated one of the finest all-around games this side of, well, Holdsclaw. Randall, a 5-10 guard, was a defensive terror, turning steal after steal into layup after layup with her amazing speed. In addition, senior guard Kellie Jolly, who broke Louisiana Tech's back in the national title game with two second-half 3-pointers, is a steady floor leader, with a solid collection of backcourt support and a mobile group of forwards and centers.



ED NESSEN / TSN

So, how do you beat Tennessee? Nobody has done it in 45 games, but Ciampi says it all starts—surprise, surprise—with an attack on Holdscaw, whose outside prowess has caught up with her skill on the post. “You’ve got to overplay Chamique, but she’s so good at creating scoring opportunities ... that you have to respect that and force them to take that outside shot,” he says.

Next, cut off the interior and stop the Lady Vols from cutting indiscriminately to the basket. That will help keep them off the boards, where they make a living on second shots. “You have to look at the paint as a war zone and that you won’t let them set up camp there,” Ciampi says.

Offensively, you have to commit as many as three players to bringing

the ball upcourt, as Tennessee’s traps and pressure are the best in the nation. Once across halfcourt, keep the ball moving and get good spacing to avoid double-teams and traps. (UT averaged 14.5 steals, and opponents averaged 26.6 turnovers.)

“They are the ultimate in pressure, so proper spacing is critical,” Ciampi says. “If you don’t have that, then it’s nothing for them to double-team and take away the passing lanes.”

With an improved SEC and many of the tougher opponents on the road, it seems improbable the Lady Vols will run the table again. And a matchup at Louisiana Tech on November 30 could end UT’s winning streak short of Louisiana Tech’s NCAA-record 54-game streak.

But with a team this good, just about anything is possible.

La tech latitude

If the Lady Vols are No. 1, Louisiana Tech ought to be No. 1A, as the national runner-ups return four of five starters and introduce four key recruits and two important transfers.

Lady Techsters coach Leon Barmore, with an .866 career winning percentage over 16 years, will have at his disposal perhaps the deepest and most talented squad he has had since his last national title team in 1988.

To start, power forward Amanda Wilson may be the best player in America not named Holdscaw. Her nearly 19 points and nine rebounds a game give the Lady Techsters an important building block up front. Next, the experienced backcourt of 5-6 senior LaQuan Stallworth and 5-5 junior Tamicha Jackson is lightning quick and is complemented by senior Monica Maxwell, who hit 39 percent of her 3-point attempts last year. That trio likely will be pushed by JC transfer Betty Lennox, who led Trinity Valley to the NJCAA title.

Barmore must replace center Alisa Burras, but he has two strong contenders in senior Priya Gilmore, the daughter of former pro standout Artis Gilmore, and junior Shaka Massey, who transfers from Arkansas, where she made the SEC’s all-freshman team. Whoever doesn’t start in the pivot will join junior Jamie Schepmann as a key reserve.

An impressive recruiting class that will add needed depth to this run-’n-gun team is led by Houston’s Ayana Anderson, a 6-2 center who averaged nearly 27 points, 12 rebounds and six blocks in high school, along with Takeisha Lewis, also 6-2, who hit for 27 points and 16 boards at Pineview High in Lisbon, La.

The Lady Techsters clearly have the talent and the athleticism for a national-title rematch with Tennessee.



Jackson (left) and Stallworth form perhaps the nation’s quickest backcourt. They are a key part of a deep and experienced Lady Techsters guard group.

COURTING



Svetlana Abrosimova

If things had gone as planned last March, the Huskies would have marched into Kansas City and repaid Tennessee for snapping their 33-game winning streak one game shy of the 1997 Final Four.

But NC State interrupted UConn’s march with a stunning 60-52 upset in the East Regional final, but Huskymania is sure its ticket to San Jose already is stamped, even without All-American Nykeshia Sales.

That’s because Connecticut managed to do what Tennessee did last year: bring in the nation’s best group of recruits, led by Sue Bird, a guard from Syosset, N.Y., and forward Asjha Jones of Piscataway, N.J.

Bird, a high school teammate of Holdscaw at fabled Christ the King; Jones; and Tamika Williams, from Dayton, Ohio, are the head of a class that will give the Huskies something they’ve never had, even the 1995 national title team: athleticism.

In addition, UConn is expecting a return to form by sophomore Shea Ralph, the 1996-97 national freshman of the year, who tore her right ACL in an NCAA Tournament game that season; she reinjured the knee before last season and redshirted.

Ralph has been working hard to get back to where she was, and anyone who has seen her has no doubt she and sophomore wing Svetlana Abrosimova can get the Huskies back to the Final Four.

“She (Ralph) has this innate ability to get fouled and get the ball up to rim to get a chance at a 3-point play,” says former Husky Meghan Pattyson, who does analysis on WNBA games for Lifetime. “She does that better than anyone I’ve ever seen. I have all the faith in the world she’ll be back.”

Not to be overlooked

■ Supposedly, that which doesn’t kill you makes you stronger, and if Duke gets to the Final Four, that theory will be proved again. In addition to the traditional ACC toughies, the Blue Devils face Tennessee, Connecticut, UCLA, Vanderbilt, Notre Dame, possibly Florida and either Stanford or Arkansas.

It’s a suicidal schedule, to be sure, but one Gail Goestenors hopes will get her team—with seven seniors—ready to better last year’s tourney run, when the ACC champs reached the West Regional final. “I told the team when I posted the schedule that we can either be ranked No. 1 or we don’t get into the NCAA Tournament,” Goestenors says. “They all looked excited and ready for the challenge. We’ll take our lumps, but it will be very good for us.”

■ UCLA, which won the 1978 AIAW title but hasn’t come close in the NCAA tourney, may be up for the run as well. Coach Kathy Olivier has a deep and talented squad, led by juniors Erica Gomez and Maylana Martin, that looks capable of taking the Pac-10 title away from Stanford and reaching the Final Four.

Should it stay in the West at tournament time, UCLA will have a big factor in its favor: The West regional will be at the L.A. Sports Arena. UCLA could have used that advantage last season when two poor calls by officials at Alabama cost the Bruins a Sweet 16 berth.

■ Purdue should be a solid favorite in the Big Ten, with seniors Stephanie White-McCarty and Ukari Figgs forming perhaps the best backcourt in the country. And Alabama and Georgia should challenge Tennessee more strongly in the SEC than last year, though it’s doubtful either can keep UT from another SEC title.

OK, so everyone in the Western Hemisphere knows WNBA president Val Ackerman is heading to the podium to name Tennessee's Chamique Holdsclaw as the first pick in the next draft. Who else, in addition to our TSN preseason All-Americans, is likely to get the call from either league?

Mery Andrade, F, 6-1, Old Dominion—A clutch performer with one of the meanest streaks in the game.

Monick Foote, G/F, 6-0, Virginia—Good perimeter size and the willingness to shoot (37 percent career 3-point shooter).

Noelia Gomez, F, 6-3, George Washington—First Colonial to score 1,000 points in first two seasons.

Amber Hall, F, 6-1, Washington—A tad undersized, but a terror on the boards.

Alicia Sheeler, C, 6-3, Illinois—Showed steady improvement last year and should surprise a lot of folks on the low post.

Itoro Umoh, G, 5-7, Clemson—Possibly the fastest guard in the country from foul line to foul line and a great defender.

Coaching changes

The most significant change-of-address card from the offseason won't actually get filled out until after this season. Carolyn Peck, who led Purdue to the Big Ten tourney title and a berth in the Midwest Regional final last year, will leave the Boilermakers after this season to become coach and G.M. of the WNBA's Orlando franchise, which begins play next summer.

"It (the decision to leave) was extremely tough," says Peck, who became Purdue's third coach in three years last year. "I have a very close family here with the players and the coaches, and people said, 'Carolyn, you're 32. If you wait, you can do this later on.'"

"But I would like to some day have a family, and to up and move my family somewhere down the road would not be as easy then as it is for me to move right now. Nobody can understand that but me."

Peck and former Texas A&M coach Candi Harvey, who takes over the ABL's new Nashville Noise, are this year's additions to a growing trend of coaches from the power conferences leaving for the pros.

In the WNBA's first season, for instance, the league was able to snare only former Mississippi coach Van Chancellor, who led the Houston Comets to the league title. Heavyweights such as Vanderbilt's Jim Foster, Old Dominion's Wendy Larry and Duke's Gail Goestenkors listened seriously before staying put. But as the leagues mature and grow, their siren calls become more enticing.

"I think some coaches will relish the opportunity to coach professionally," Goestenkors says. "That recruiting has gotten out of control is going to make professional coaching look that much more attractive."

The procession likely won't happen in full force until the pro salaries catch up to what the top college coaches are earning. Most coaches at the major Division I level are earning at least six figures, with the top (Tennessee's Pat Summitt, Stanford's Tara VanDerveer) pulling in at least \$200,000, a mark that neither the ABL nor the WNBA can approach. Yet.

The only two coaching switches in the major conferences came in the Big 12, where Peggie Gillom, an assistant to Chancellor at Houston, will take over at Texas A&M, and Cindy Stein, who led Emporia (Kan.) State to the Division II title game last year, succeeds Joann Rutherford at Missouri.

Prepping for the future

If you see Pat Summitt, Tara VanDerveer or Geno Auriemma in your town during recruiting season, they're probably looking to sign one or more of these players. All helped the United States win the bronze at the World Youth Games in Russia over the summer:

Player	Pos.	Ht.	City/High school
Chantelle Anderson	C	6-5	Vancouver, Wash./Vanco Hudson Bay
Jamie Carey	G	5-4	Thornton, Col./Horizon
Kaayla Chones	F	6-3	Pepper Pike, Ohio/Eastlake North
Cheryl Ford	F	6-3	Haynesville, La./Summersville
Mauri Horton	G	5-8	Minneapolis/Minneapolis North
Kara Lawson	G	5-8	Alexandria, Va./West Springfield
Sheana Mosch	G	5-11	Clearfield, Pa./Dubois Central Christian
Alicia Ratay	F/G	5-11	Lake Zurich, Ill./Lake Zurich
Nina Smith	C	6-3	Waterloo, Iowa/Waterloo West



Holdsclaw is the best player in the nation and she'll have a chance to show it against Louisiana Tech on November 30.

Mark your calendar

Here's a list of early-season matchups that may have a bearing on the national championship chase—or at least should be fun to watch:

November 13-14: Four in the Fall, in San Jose, Calif. Right off the bat, from the site of the Final Four

no less, we may learn whether Duke will duel Connecticut for Eastern supremacy, and if Arkansas or Stanford have a Final Four in the near future.

November 15: State Farm Classic, in West Lafayette, Ind. Purdue will be one of Tennessee's first challenges. The other game features North Carolina, which gave Tennessee its toughest challenge in last year's NCAAAs, taking on a Kansas team coming off a surprising Sweet 16 run.

November 30: Tennessee at

Louisiana Tech: A rematch of last season's NCAA title game—and a preview of this year's?

December 4: Stanford at Santa Clara. The defending WCC champion Broncos are looking for respect. Beating the symbol of Western supremacy might do it.

December 19: Big Ten-SEC Challenge, in Champaign, Ill. Tauja Catchings, Tamika's older sister, could make a bid for some All-American notice when Illinois faces Florida.

December 28: Duke at UCLA. A solid road performance against UCLA's heralded Maylana Martin could prepare Duke

senior Peyton Black for conference play.

January 2: Tennessee at UConn. The storied series is tied at three each.

January 18: UConn at Louisiana Tech: The two best recruiting classes in the nation go at it.

January 31: George Washington vs. NC State: The Colonials return all their starters, while the Wolfpack, with talented sophomore Tynesha Lewis, are out to prove last year's Final Four berth was not a fluke. **TSN**

Milton Kent covers the media and women's basketball for the Baltimore Sun.

TSN's Preseason All-American team

FIRST TEAM

Pos.	Player	School	Height	Cl.
F	Tamika Catchings	Tennessee	6-1	Soph.
F	Chamique Holdsclaw	Tennessee	6-2	Sr.
F	Amanda Wilson	Louisiana Tech	6-0	Sr.
G/F	Dominique Canty	Alabama	5-10	Sr.
G	Dalma Ivanyi	Florida International	5-10	Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Pos.	Player	School	Height	Cl.
F	Maylana Martin	UCLA	6-3	Jr.
F/G	Stephanie White-McCarty	Purdue	5-11	Sr.
F	Tamika Whitmore	Memphis	6-2	Sr.
G	Erica Gomez	UCLA	5-9	Jr.
G	Semeka Randall	Tennessee	5-10	Soph.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Chamique Holdsclaw, F, Tennessee

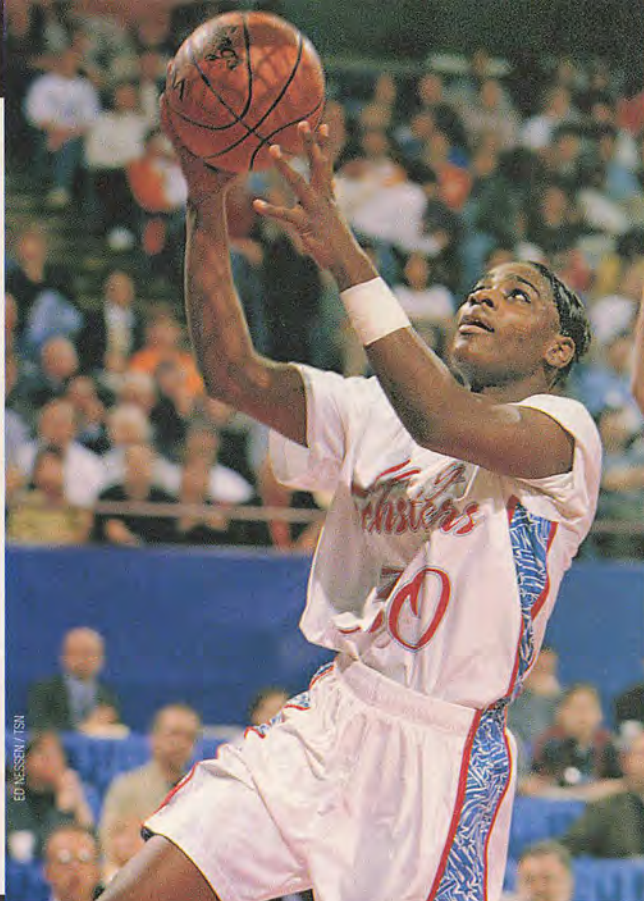
COACH OF THE YEAR

Pat Summitt, Tennessee

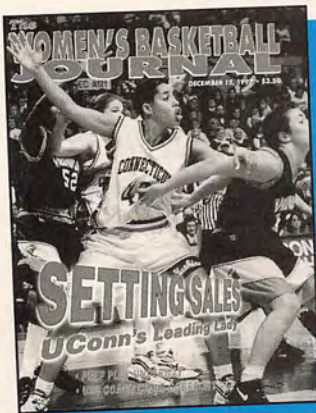
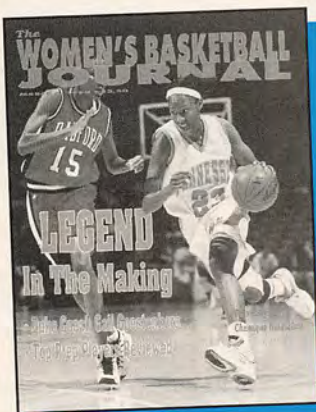
FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Tamika Williams, F, Connecticut

*Wilson is a big reason
Louisiana Tech
has a chance
to again
advance to the
NCAA final.*



TSN/TSN



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Tennessee players hope to celebrate a fourth consecutive NCAA title.

women's TOP 25

1. Tennessee

Coach: Pat Summitt (664-143, 24 years overall).

1997-98 finish: 39-0. SEC East: 14-0/1st. Beat Louisiana Tech to win national championship.

Starters returning (5): Tamika Catchings, F, 6-1/Soph. (18.2 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 54 fg%, 2.4 apg, 1.6 bpg, 2.6 spg); Kellie Jolly, G, 5-10/Sr. (7.6 ppg, 84 ft%, 42 3-pt%, 3.8 apg); Chamique Holdsclaw, F, 6-2/Sr. (23.5 ppg, 8.4 rpg, 55 fg%, 3.0 apg, 2.8 spg); Semeka Randall, G, 5-10/Soph. (15.9 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 2.7 spg); LaShonda Stephens, C, 6-3/Jr. (4.0 ppg, 3.4 rpg).

Others returning: Niya Butts, G, 6-0/Jr. (5.3 mpg); Kristen Clement, G, 5-11/Soph. (5.6 ppg, 3.2 apg); Kyra Elzy, G, 6-1/Jr. (7.0 ppg, 4.0 rpg); Teresa Geter, C, 6-3/Soph. (6.3 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 55 fg%); Misty Greene, G/F, 5-9/Sr. (8.1 mpg).

Top newcomers: Shalon Pillow, C, 6-3/Fr.; Michelle Snow, C, 6-5/Fr.

Key to success: The greatest—and perhaps only—need was filled with the signings of centers Shalon Pillow and Michelle Snow. With the final college run of Chamique Holdsclaw, the return of sophomores Tamika Catchings, Semeka Randall, Kristen Clement and Teresa Geter, and Kellie Jolly back at the point for a third consecutive year, Tennessee appears all but unbeatable. And that doesn't even factor in the return of Kyra Elzy (knee injury). Her versatility helps create a countless combination of lineups.

Outlook: With speed, athleticism, depth and defense, a second consecutive undefeated season and seventh national title are all but expected. While pressure and fanfare may be

overwhelming and Louisiana Tech even more formidable, Pat Summitt and Holdsclaw, with an incredible supporting cast, are just the ones to pull it off.

2. Louisiana Tech

Coach: Leon Barmore (459-71, 16 years overall).

1997-98 finish: 31-4. Sun Belt: 13-1/1st. Lost to Tennessee in NCAA championship game.

Starters lost (1): Alisa Burras, C (14.2 ppg, 8.1 rpg, 60 fg%).

Starters returning (4): Tamicha Jackson, G, 5-5/Jr. (14.6 ppg, 4.7 apg, 2.5 spg); Monica Maxwell, G/F, 5-9/Sr. (11.9 ppg, 6.4 rpg); LaQuan Stallworth, G, 5-6/Sr. (11.4 ppg, 6.4 apg); Amanda Wilson, F, 6-0/Sr. (18.5 ppg, 8.8 rpg, 2.9 spg, 62 fg%).

Others returning: Melshika Bowman, C, 6-2/Soph. (3.1 ppg, 3.4 rpg); Danielle Butler, F/C, 6-2/Soph. (4.2 ppg); Priya Gilmore, C, 6-3/Sr. (3.3 rpg); Jamie Scheppmann, G, 5-9/Jr. (5.0 ppg).

Top newcomers: Crystal Allen, F, 5-9/Fr.; Ayana Anderson, F/C, 6-2/Fr.; Brooke Lassiter, G, 5-9/Fr.; Betty Lennox, G, 5-8/Jr. (JC); Takeisha Lewis, C, 6-2/Fr.; Shaka Massey, C, 6-3/Jr. (transfer/Arkansas); Christy Sides, G, 5-8/Jr. (transfer/Mississippi).

Key to success: Last year, the team thrived despite little depth. This year, with the second-ranked recruiting class, expect LaTech to completely wear down teams with a nine- or even 10-deep rotation. Shaka Massey, seventh all-time in blocks at Arkansas, should help Amanda Wilson down low after the loss of Alisa Burras, while guards Christy Sides,

Brooke Lassiter and Betty Lennox provide relief for Tamicha Jackson and LaQuan Stallworth. The schedule includes visits by Tennessee and Connecticut and a tougher Sun Belt slate.

Outlook: Beyond the starters, the team is not that experienced. But with greater depth and maybe the greatest mix of speed and athleticism in the women's game, anything less than a return to the NCAA title game—and a rematch with Tennessee—could be disappointing.

3. Connecticut

Coach: Geno Auriemma (328-89, 13 years overall).

1997-98 finish: 34-3. Big East: 6-1/1st. Lost to NC State in NCAA regional final.

Starters lost (2): Nykesha Sales, F (20.9 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 3.3 spg); Rita Williams, G (10.2 ppg, 4.0 apg).

Starters returning (3): Svetlana Abrosimova, F, 6-1/Soph. (14.5 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 3.1 apg); Amy Duran, F/G, 5-11/Sr. (9.6 ppg, 3.4 apg); Paige Sauer, C/F, 6-5/Jr. (6.1 ppg, 4.2 rpg).

Others returning: Tihana Abrlic, G/F, 6-3/Sr. (1.5 apg); Marci Czel, G, 5-7/Soph. (2.9 mpg); Courtney Gainey, G/F, 5-9/Sr. (4.3 mpg); Marci Glenney, G, 5-11/Soph. (8.8 mpg); Stacy Hansmeyer, F, 6-1/Jr. (8.5 ppg, 5.2 rpg); Shea Ralph, G/F, 6-0/Soph. (RS/knee); Kelly Schumacher, F/C, 6-5/Soph. (5.1 ppg, 2.9 rpg).

Top newcomers: Sue Bird, G, 5-9/Fr.; Swintayla Cash, F, 6-2/Fr.; Asjha Jones, F, 6-1/Fr.; Keirsten Walters, G, 5-8/Fr.; Tamika Williams, F, 6-1/Fr.

Key to success: Along with the great postseason play of

Paige Sauer, the defense and spark of Svetlana Abrosimova and the return of '96-'97 TSN freshman of the year Shea Ralph after knee surgery, the recruiting class features five *Parade* All-Americans, led by Naismith player of the year Tamika Williams.

Outlook: Can this class do for the Huskies what Tennessee's did for it last year? Each recruit is versatile enough to play at least two spots, as are Ralph and Abrosimova, but that flexibility leaves the lineup a bit unsettled. For now, it appears Sauer is at center and Amy Duran at off-guard. Once a point is found—it's Tihana Abrlic for now—the rest of the lineup should fall into place, paving the way for Connecticut to roll into the next millennium.

4. UCLA

Coach: Kathy Olivier (71-66, five years overall).

1997-98 finish: 20-9. Pac-10: 14-4/2nd. Lost to Alabama in NCAA regional second round.

Starters lost (1): Tawana Grimes, G (3.4 rpg).

Starters returning (4): Janae Hubbard, C, 6-4/Jr. (11.0 ppg, 6.1 rpg); Erica Gomez, G, 5-9/Jr. (7.5 ppg, 5.9 apg, 2.3 spg); Maylana Martin, F, 6-3/Jr. (18.8 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 1.5 spg); Marie Philman, F, 6-0/Jr. (10.1 ppg, 3.8 rpg).

Others returning: LaCresha Flannigan, G, 5-7/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 10.1 mpg); Carly Funicello, C, 6-4/Jr. (3.8 ppg); Takiyah Jackson, F, 6-0/Jr. (7.0 mpg); Melanie Pearson, G, 6-1/Jr. (9.5 ppg, 45.3-pts%).

Top newcomers: Michelle Greco, G, 5-9/Fr.; Natalie Nakase, G, 5-2/Fr.; Ayesha Rembert, F, 6-0/Soph. (transfer/Marquette).

Key to success: Maylana Martin leads a dominant frontcourt that was bolstered by the emergence of Marie Philman and imposing Janae Hubbard (the trio provided 50 percent of last season's scoring). Add Erica Gomez, one of the nation's best points, and the inside-outside combo is tough to beat. Versatile sharpshooter Melanie Pearson will take Tawana Grimes' lineup spot. But replacing Grimes' defense will be tough.

Outlook: With 173 career starts between the projected starters (four returning starters and Pearson), the junior-heavy Bruins have the experience and the hunger after last year's buzzer-tainted NCAA loss to Alabama to fill a Final Four berth.

5. Duke

Coach: Gail Goetseniors (119-61, six years overall).

1997-98 finish: 24-8. ACC: 13-3/1st. Lost to Arkansas in NCAA regional final.

Starters returning (5): Payton Black, C, 6-4/Sr. (10.5 ppg, 3.6 rpg); Peppi Browne, G/F, 5-11/Jr. (10.7 ppg, 6.2 rpg); Nicole Erickson, G, 5-6/Sr. (12.8 ppg, 3.3 apg, 88 ft%); Hilary Howard, G, 5-7/Sr. (9.8 ppg, 4.4 apg); Michele VanGorp, C, 6-6/Sr. (10.4 ppg, 4.1 rpg).

Others returning: Jennifer Forte, C, 6-3/Jr. (2.3 mpg); Juanita Hepburn, C, 6-5/Sr. (4.3 mpg); Takisha Jones, F, 6-0/Sr. (4.8 mpg); Naz Medhanie, G, 5-7/Sr. (3.8 mpg); Rochelle Parent, F, 6-0/Soph. (4.0 ppg, 3.9 rpg); Lauren Rice, F, 6-1/Jr. (6.1 ppg, 5.1 rpg); Georgia Schweitzer, G, 6-0/Soph. (7.7 ppg); Missy West, G, 5-10/So. (RS/knee).

Top newcomers: Krista Gingrich, G, 5-9/Fr.; Janee Hayes, F, 6-0/Fr.

Key to success: With the return of All-ACC guards Hilary Howard and Nicole Erickson and the addition of Krista Gingrich, Duke's backcourt again will be the heart of the team. Small forward Peppi Browne, one of four returnees to average double figures in scoring, led the team in steals and rebounds. But more consistency is needed in the low post, where starters could vary from game to game.

Outlook: The Blue Devils have the backcourt, balanced scoring, experience and frontcourt potential to make their first Final Four. A tough early schedule (Tennessee, UCLA, Florida, Notre Dame, Connecticut and Stanford or Arkansas) should help pave the way to at least a second consecutive ACC title.

6. Alabama

Coach: Rick Moody (199-81, nine years overall).

1997-98 finish: 24-10. SEC West: 10-5/1st. Lost to Louisiana Tech in NCAA regional semifinal.

Starters lost (3): Brittney Ezell, G (11.0 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 6.5 apg); Leah Goss, G (8.0 ppg, 3.5 rpg); Tausha Mills, C (12.3 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 1.9 bpg).

Starters returning (2): Dominique Canty, G/F, 5-10/Sr. (21.5 ppg, 7.1 rpg, 4.8 apg); LaToya Caudle, F, 6-3/Sr. (3.3 ppg, 3.9 rpg).

Others returning: Kari Belcher, G, 5-4/Jr. (2.1 mpg); Nicole Carruth, G, 5-8/Soph. (4.1 ppg, 48.3-pts%, 87 ft%); Joni Crenshaw, F, 6-1/Soph. (5.5 ppg, 4.0 rpg); Reagan Croyle, G/F, 6-1, Soph. (5.7 mpg); Jaqui Jones, F, 5-10/Jr. (3.0 mpg); Latrish Jones, F/C, 6-0/Sr. (3.9 ppg, 4.1 rpg).

Top newcomers: LaNisha Cartwell, F/C, 6-2/Fr.; Shun Hunter, F, 5-11/Fr.; Shondra Johnson, G, 5-9/Fr.; Nikki Prescott, F/C, 6-2/Fr.; Beth Vice, G/F, 5-11/Fr.; Kaunda Williams, G, 5-8/Jr. (JC).

Key to success: The only sure starter is Dominique Canty, who could play either wing or even the point this season. Quick and athletic newcomers Kaunda Williams and Shondra Johnson and Kentucky "Ms. Basketball" Beth Vice also are expected to be key in a strong backcourt. Beyond LaToya Caudle, there's no dominant post player, and the lack of a true center is a concern. But freshman LaNisha Cartwell should make an impact there.

Outlook: The non-conference schedule is not that tough. That should help this recruiting class, ranked as high as No. 4, get its feet wet and allow the post game time to come together before jumping into SEC action. With Canty, the Tide should have no problem winning the SEC West again.

7. Purdue

Coach: Carolyn Peck (23-10, one year overall).

1997-98 finish: 23-10. Big Ten: 10-6/T3rd. Lost to Louisiana Tech in NCAA regional final.

Starters returning (5): Mackenzie Curless, F, 6-1/Jr. (7.8 ppg, 4.0 rpg); Michelle Duhart, F, 6-0/Jr. (5.2 ppg, 5.4 rpg, 60 ft%); Ukari Figgs, G, 5-9/Sr. (15.5 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 86 ft%, 3.7 apg); Stephanie White-McCarty, G/F, 5-11/Sr. (20.6 ppg, 6.1 rpg, 4.8 apg, 2.4 spg); Tiffany Young, G, 5-11/Jr. (5.1 ppg, 2.0 rpg).

Others returning: Danielle Bird, G, 5-7/Jr. (3.8 mpg); Camille Cooper, C, 6-4/Soph. (6.6 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 60 ft%); Candi Crawford, F, 6-1/Soph. (8.0 mpg); Katie Douglas, G/F, 6-1/Soph. (8.6 ppg, 4.3 rpg, 3.7 apg); Mo-nique Langston, G/F, 5-11/Soph. (5.4 mpg); Connie Murdock, F, 6-2/Soph. (5.8 mpg); Shayla Potter, G, 5-6/Jr. (3.0 mpg); Amy Shaffer, F, 6-0/Jr. (2.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Kelly Komara, G, 5-7/Fr.; Mary Jo Noon, C, 6-5/Fr.

Key to success: All 13 letterwinners return, including All-Big Ten guards Stephanie White-McCarty and Ukari Figgs; those two, with Katie Douglas, might form the best backcourt in the nation. Center Camille Cooper could join Douglas as a newcomer in the starting lineup, as both bring greater scoring ability. And the top-10 recruiting class of Mary Jo Noon and Indiana "Miss Basketball" Kelly Komara adds more depth at center and guard.

Outlook: With experience, a backcourt that can do it all and this being the last season not only for White-McCarty and Figgs but also coach Carolyn Peck—who's heading to the WNBA at season's end—expectations of a Big Ten title and deep NCAA run are great.

8. Rutgers

Coach: C. Vivian Stringer (46-42, three years; 566-177, 26 years overall).

1997-98 finish: 22-10. Big East 7: 14-4/1st. Lost to Tennessee in NCAA regional final.

Starters lost (1): LaTana Lillard, G (3.3 ppg, 2.2 spg).

Starters returning (4): Jennifer Clemente, C, 6-2/Sr. (3.0 ppg, 3.2 rpg); Linda Miles, G/F, 6-0/Soph. (8.3 ppg, 6.9 rpg); Natasha Pointer, G, 5-6/Soph. (14.0 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 5.6 apg, 3.1 spg); Tomora Young, G, 5-10/Sr. (13.7 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 2.4 apg, 1.9 spg, 90 ft%).

Others returning: Dana Boonen, C, 6-5/Soph. (6.0 mpg); Coko Eggleston, C, 6-2/Jr. (9.5 mpg); Usha Gilmore, G/F, 6-0/Jr. (5.5 ppg, 2.5 rpg); Andrea Honeycutt, F, 6-1/Jr. (6.0 mpg); Rachel Pieczynski, G, 5-6/Sr. (RS); Shawnetta Stewart, G, 5-10/Jr. (10.9 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 1.5 spg); Tammy Sutton-Brown, C, 6-4/Soph. (7.0 ppg, 4.9 rpg, 1.4 bpg, 54 ft%).

Top newcomers: Davalyn Cunningham, F, 6-0/Fr.; Christina

Fowler, G, 5-9/Fr.

Key to success: Ninety-five percent of the scoring and rebounding are back, led by the backcourt of Big East rookie of the year Natasha Pointer and Big East first-teamer Tomora Young. The loss of small forward LaTana Lillard, who directed the team's stifling defense, is big, but the athletic group will be helped by the addition of shooters Christina Fowler and Rachel Pieczynski and the development of Tammy Sutton-Brown and Coko Eggleston in the post.

Outlook: Look for Usha Gilmore to take over for Lillard, who is out at least the first semester for personal reasons. Shawnetta Stewart and possibly Linda Miles will add some depth at the spot, too. Rebounding and points in the paint will be key now that Rutgers' underdog status is gone.

9. Stanford

Coach: Tara VanDerveer (306-70, 12 years; 458-121, 19 years overall).

1997-98 finish: 21-6. Pac-10: 17-1/1st. Lost to Harvard in NCAA regional first round.

Starters lost (3): Vanessa Nygaard, F (14.9 ppg, 6.2 rpg); Heather Owen, F (10.0 ppg, 5.3 rpg); Olympia Scott, F (17.5 ppg, 7.5 rpg).

Starters returning (2): Milena Flores, G, 5-6/Jr. (9.7 ppg, 6.1 apg); Regan Freuen, F/G, 6-0/Sr. (5.6 ppg).

Others returning: Christina Batastini, G, 5-10/Jr. (3.7 ppg, 1.4 rpg); Sarah Dimson, F, 6-0/Soph. (7.1 mpg); Yvonne Gbalazeh, G, 5-5/Jr. (6.6 mpg); Karesa Granderson, F, 6-2/Soph. (4.4 mpg); Carolyn Moos, F/C, 6-6/Soph. (6.1 mpg); Naila Moseley, G, 6-1/Soph. (1.8 mpg).

Top newcomers: Bethany Donaphin, F, 6-2/Fr.; Cori Enghusen, C, 6-7/Fr.; Enjoli Izidor, F, 6-0/Fr.; Lauren St. Clair, G/F, 6-0/Fr.; Lindsey Yamasaki, G, 6-1/Fr.

Key to success: The frontcourt is depleted with the losses of three starters and all-star Kristin Folk. In fact, only 18 percent of the scoring and 19 percent of the rebounding return for the four-time defending Pac-10 champs. But Tara VanDerveer compiled the consensus No. 3 recruiting class, led by wings Lindsey Yamasaki and Lauren St. Clair and 6-7 Cori Enghusen.

Outlook: It depends on how fast this young collection of talent (Regan Freuen is the only senior) is able to find and define their roles. The Cardinal, which should be a bit quicker and have a different look than in recent seasons, could well find their way back to the top tier of teams, but it could take a year, particularly with a non-conference schedule that includes Purdue, Texas Tech, Connecticut or Duke and a trip to Tennessee.

10. Georgia

Coach: Andy Landers (459-141, 19 years, 541-162, 23 years overall).

1997-98 finish: 17-11. SEC East: 8-6/4th. Lost to George Washington in NCAA regional first round.

Starters returning (5): Angie Ball, F, 6-3/Jr. (4.7 ppg, 4.9 rpg); Pam Irwin, G, 5-10/Sr. (13.6 ppg, 86 ft%); Coco Miller, G, 5-10/Soph. (16.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg, 3.9 apg, 1.8 spg); Kelly Miller, G, 5-10/Soph. (17.5 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 5.9 apg, 2.7 spg); Elena Vishniakova, F, 6-3/Soph. (7.9 ppg, 6.9 rpg).

Others returning: Tawnya Nash, C, 6-1/Soph. (4.5 ppg); Kiesha Brown, G, 5-10/Soph. (RS).

Top newcomers: Cornisha Cotton, F, 6-1/Fr.; Tawana McDonald, C, 6-4/Fr.; Camille Murphy, G, 5-6/Fr.; Deana Nolan, G, 5-10/Soph. (Prop 48); Shavonda Willis, C, 6-3/Jr. (JC).

Key to success: Only six players return from last year's squad, but five are starters, led by guards Pam Irwin and twins Kelly and Coco Miller. Last year's squad survived on a shoe-string roster—eight players and four walk-ons—so even though the team returns just one senior and one junior, this is a battle-tested group. But one of the incoming post players—likely Tawana McDonald—will need to make her presence known quickly.

Outlook: With the new depth and talented backcourt, which also welcomes Kiesha Brown and Deana Nolan, the Bulldogs should be able to run Andy Landers' up-tempo style. The conference schedule is brutal (the team must face Tennessee, Florida and Arkansas twice each), but an easy non-conference schedule will help.

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—TEAM CAPSULES BY ANNA M. JONES

women's -25

11. NC State (25-7): A second consecutive Final Four appearance will be tough, but spunky Tynesha Lewis returns to lead a solid backcourt that welcomes Georgetown transfer Kim Smith. Freshman Keani Christianson could make an early impact in the post with 6-6 Summer Erb and Monica Bates after the loss of Chasity Melvin and Peace Shepard.

12. North Carolina (27-7): Sophomores Nikki Teasley and Juana Brown create a potent backcourt with veteran Chanel Wright, but the post lacks size and experience after the loss of two-time ACC player of the year Tracy Reid. Jackie Higgins, a 6-1 sophomore who was a first-team junior college All-American last season, should contribute.

13. Florida (23-9): Talatha Bingham, the lone senior, and Tiffany Travis, recovering from knee surgery, are perimeter threats and freshman Brandi McCain will challenge at the point. But a big key is whether sophomore Tamara Stocks, the team's only true post player, can run the post after All-American Murriel Page's departure.

14. Texas Tech (26-5): All-American Alicia Thompson is gone, but with the return of the remaining starters, Tech's defense should be stifling again. Rene Hanebutt and Julie Lake will run the team for a fourth year, while Angie Brazier could get post help from fellow South Plains transfer Aleah Johnson and Tanisha Ellison.

15. Illinois (20-10): All-American Ashley Berggren headlines 11 departures. But six newcomers bring needed speed for the four returnees (three starters). All-Big Ten picks Alicia Sheeler and Tauja Catchings should get post help from Cindy Dallas, while Illinois "Ms. Basketball" Allison Curtin and Rutgers transfer Susan Blausner strengthen the perimeter.

16. Virginia (19-10): Bolstered by the returns of Monick Foote and Tiffany Bower, who were injured last season, to a backcourt that includes All-ACC freshman Erin Stovall, this might be the ACC's quickest team. The defense, led by shot-blocking DeMya Walker, again will be strong despite a lack of size.

17. Notre Dame (22-10): Four-year starter Molly Peirick is gone, but the rest of an athletic starting lineup returns from a squad that upset Texas Tech in last year's NAAs. Sophomores Ruth Riley and Kelley Siemon anchor a frontcourt that creates a potent outside-inside mix with point Niele Ivey and Sheila McMillen.

18. Iowa State (25-8): Stacy Frese and Megan Taylor—1998's Big 12 newcomer and freshman of the year, respectively—return to run the team, and a stellar six-member recruiting class adds needed depth to ISU's ongoing rise. JC forward Desiree Francis will be crucial in helping replacing the frontcourt of Janel Grimm and Jayme Olson.

19. Florida International (29-2): With the loss of three starters and the switch from the Trans America Athletic to the Sun Belt, there will be no coasting to an eighth consecutive conference title. But fourth-year starting guard Dalma Ivanyi, with help from forwards Zuzana Michalcova and Laura Camps, is enough to make this a formidable team.

20. Kansas (23-9): Five starters return from last year's surprising Sweet 16 team. Lynn Pride, Suzi Raymant and Jennifer Jackson will keep the pace up, and Jaclyn Johnson, who had a great freshman season with Jackson, mans the post with Nakia Sanford. Guard Selena Scott leads a solid recruiting class that includes three players between 6-2 and 6-6.

21. Clemson (25-8): All-ACC guards Ito Umoh and Amy Geren are back to lead a squad that set a school record for wins and welcomes five JC transfers. Nikki Blassingame and small forward Natasha Anderson lead a frontcourt that should be stronger with newcomers Miesha Mattison and Joanie Mungio.

22. Memphis (22-8): Power forward Tamika Whitmore, the nation's No. 2 returning scorer and No. 2 returner in field-goal percentage, again leads the way. Starting guards Heather Phillips and Yolanda Reed also return, and touted freshman Lauren Jackson should help fill the big hole at small forward left by LaTonya Johnson.



A backcourt led by Lewis is a big reason NC State has its sights on another Final Four appearance.

ED NESSEY/TSN

23. Colorado State (24-6): Two starters are gone, but the top five scorers return, led by two-time WAC player of the year Becky Hammon, WAC first-teamer Katie Cronin and WAC freshman of the year Heather Haanen. A bit shy in height, the Rams still should claim a third—and final—WAC title in four years.

24. Arizona (23-7): Almost half the offense is gone with the loss of post players Adia Barnes and Marte Alexander from a Sweet 16 team. But Tatum Brown and Angie Lackey, both JC first-team All-Americans, are among seven touted newcomers. The backcourt of juniors Lisa Griffith and Felecity Willis should be stellar.

25. SW Missouri State (24-6): Jackie Stiles, the nation's top scoring freshman last year, and Yen Quach, the Missouri Valley newcomer, are back to run the offense, which often will go through Roshonda Reed. Freshmen Ann Cavey (6-3) and Dzenata Kadac (6-5) add needed height. Replacing Lisa Davies' defense will be tough.

Others receiving multiple votes: Arkansas, Cal-Santa Barbara, Old Dominion, Stephen F. Austin, Washington, Western Kentucky, Wisconsin, Vanderbilt.

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CONFERENCE ROUNDUP

(Conferences ranked in order of strength;
projected conference players of the year in bold)

1. SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

Predicted order of finish

EAST	WEST
1. Tennessee	1. Alabama
2. Georgia	2. Arkansas
3. Florida	3. Auburn
4. Vanderbilt	4. LSU
5. South Carolina	5. Mississippi State
6. Kentucky	6. Mississippi

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Tamika Catchings, 6-1, Soph., Tennessee
F Chamique Holdsclaw, 6-2, Sr., Tennessee
 C Conswella Sparrow, 6-2, Jr., Auburn
 G Kelly Miller, 5-10, Soph., Georgia
 G/F Dominique Canty, 5-10, Sr., Alabama

Second team

F Jaye Barnes, 6-0, Sr., Kentucky
 F Katrina Hibbert, 5-11, Jr., LSU
 C Karyn Karlin, 6-0, Jr., Arkansas
 F Annie Lester, 5-10, Jr., South Carolina
 G Semeka Randall, 5-10, Soph., Tennessee
Newcomer of the Year: G Kaunda Williams, 5-8, Jr., Alabama

This and that

Best shooter: Katrina Hibbert, LSU

Best rebounder: Annie Lester, South Carolina

Best defender: Chamique Holdsclaw, Tennessee

Best playmaker: Tiffany Krantz, Auburn

On the rise: Georgia's young club could easily make a huge leap this season. South Carolina, under second-year coach Susan Walvius, is another program headed up.

Best bet: Tennessee again will be perfect and stretch its winning streak past 80 games.

Odds and ends: Alabama, which came the closest to defeating Tennessee last year, should provide the most serious challenge again. The Tide lost point guard Brittney Ezell, but Dominique Canty returns after finishing second in the SEC scoring race (22.3 ppg). Junior college All-American Kaunda Williams adds an explosive game. ... After two down years, Georgia will be back in the title chase. Twins Kelly and Coco Miller will lead the way, but the sophomores will receive plenty of backcourt help from Kiesha Brown (back from an injury) and Pam Irwin, plus a sterling recruiting class. ... This could be another strong season for Arkansas, but it won't repeat last season's Final Four run. Although point guard Christy Smith battled injuries much of her senior season, she will be missed. ... Florida also returns a great cast, but the loss of All-American Murriel Page leaves a huge hole in the paint. ... Auburn and Vanderbilt could slip into the bottom half of the SEC, but they could mature in time for an NCAA run. —Doug Herakovich

2. ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE

Predicted order of finish

1. Duke	6. Maryland
2. North Carolina	7. Florida State
3. NC State	8. Georgia Tech
4. Clemson	9. Wake Forest
5. Virginia	

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Peppi Browne, 5-11, Jr., Duke
F/C DeMya Walker, 6-2, Sr., Virginia
 G Amy Geren, 5-11, Sr., Clemson
 G/F Monick Foote, 6-0, Sr., Virginia
 G Nikki Teasley, 6-1, Soph., North Carolina

Second team

F Latavia Coleman, 5-10, Jr., Florida State
 C Brooke Wyckoff, 6-1, So., Florida State
 G Hilary Howard, 5-7, Sr., Duke
 G/F Tynesha Lewis, 5-10, So., NC State
 G/F Chanel Wright, 6-0, Sr., North Carolina
Newcomer of the year: G Krista Gingrich, 5-9, Fr., Duke

This and that

Best shooters: Amy Geren, Clemson and Nicole Erickson, Duke

Best rebounder: DeMya Walker, Virginia

Best defender: Ito Umo, Clemson

Best playmaker: Hilary Howard, Duke

On the rise: Florida State. Forwards Latavia Coleman and Brooke Wyckoff will help second-year coach Sue Semrau's building process.

Best bets: Duke will set a school record for wins, breaking the mark of 26 set in 1995-96. ... At least five ACC teams will make the NCAA Tournament for a third consecutive year.

Odds and ends: Before NC State reached Kansas City last year, the ACC had not been represented in the Final Four since 1994, when North Carolina won it all. ... The conference's top two outside shooters—Clemson's Amy Geren and Duke's Nicole Erickson—tied for the league lead (and ninth place nationally) in free-throw shooting percentage (92-of-105, 87.6 percent). ... Now in her seventh season at Duke, Gail Goetseniors has turned the Blue Devils into a perennial Top 10 program. Last season, the Devils were one game shy of the Final Four. This season, Duke will feature a balanced unit that will be led by a savvy veteran backcourt of Nicole Erickson and Hilary Howard. ... Although Clemson lost two inside players, it should be chasing the ACC title again. The Tigers, like Duke, have an outstanding senior backcourt in Amy Geren and Ito Umo, an explosive athlete who can alter the course of a game with her offense or defense. ... Virginia loses All-ACC guard Mimi McKinney, but Monick Foote and Tiffany Bower are back. Foote was a preseason All-American candidate before being hit by a stress fracture in her ankle. And ACC first-teamer DeMya Walker, who led the team in points and rebounds, is back for a final run. —Doug Herakovich

3. PACIFIC-10

Predicted order of finish:

1. UCLA	6. USC
2. Stanford	7. Arizona State
3. Arizona	8. California
4. Washington	9. Oregon State
5. Oregon	10. Washington State

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Amber Hall, 6-1, Jr., Washington
F Maylana Martin, 6-3, Jr., UCLA
 C Jenny Mowe, 6-5, Soph., Oregon
 G Erica Gomez, 5-9, Jr., UCLA
 G Jamie Redd, 5-10, Jr., Washington

Second team

C Rachel Holt, 6-3, Jr., Arizona State
 F Brianne Meharry, 6-1, Soph., Oregon
 F Adrain Williams, 6-4, Sr., USC
 G Kristin Clark, 5-7, Sr., USC
 G Milena Flores, 5-6, Jr., Stanford

Newcomer of the year: G Lindsey Yamasaki, 6-1, Fr., Stanford

This and that

Best shooter: Janae Hubbard, UCLA

Best rebounder: Amber Hall, Washington

Best defender: Kristin Clark, USC

Best playmaker: Milena Flores, Stanford

On the rise: Oregon. Coach Jody Runge has led Oregon to five consecutive winning seasons. The only starter lost is point Natalie Hughes (although she's a key loss), but two former starters return from injury. The frontcourt of Sonja Curtis, Natasha O'Brien and Angelina Wolvert should be solid.

Best bets: There will be no runaway champion (i.e. Stanford), as the conference's top five teams should prove very competitive. ... Stanford freshmen Lindsey Yamasaki, Lauren St. Clair and Cori Enghusen will see immediate playing time because of needs at virtually all positions. ... Another disappointing year could be the last for Cal's Marianne Stanley.

Odds and ends: UCLA won 18 of its final 23 games last season. ... Arizona will have to compensate for the loss of Adia Barnes and Marte Alexander, who combined for 35 points and 14 rebounds a game. Joan Bonvincini has brought in the best recruiting class in Arizona history in freshmen Tysell Bozeman, Julie Brase (granddaughter of Arizona men's coach Lute Olson) and Elizabeth Pickney. ... ASU was outrebounded by 5.1 a game last year, the second-worst margin in the conference. ... USC led the league in turnover margin last season (+4.7) but was last in rebounding margin (-5.9). ... Washington started last season 10-0 but won just eight of its last 18 games. ... Connecticut transfer and former Oregon player of the year Tammy Arnold should contribute immediately for Oregon State. —Michelle Smith

4. BIG TEN

Predicted order of finish:

1. Purdue	7. Michigan
2. Illinois	8. Northwestern
3. Wisconsin	9. Iowa
4. Penn State	10. Michigan State
5. Ohio State	11. Minnesota
6. Indiana	

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Kristina Divjak, 6-0, Sr., Northwestern
 C Andrea Garner, 6-3, Jr., Penn State
 F Marrita Porter, 5-11, Sr., Ohio State
 G Ukari Figgs, 5-9, Sr., Purdue
 G/F Stephanie White-McCarty, 5-11, Sr., Purdue

Second team

F Tauja Catchings, 6-1, Jr., Illinois

F Larecha Jones, 6-1, Sr., Ohio State

G Kristi Green, 5-2, Sr., Indiana

G/F LaTonya Sims, 6-3, So., Wisconsin

G Stacey Thomas, 5-10, Jr., Michigan

Newcomer of the year: G Lindsey Meder, 5-8, Fr., Iowa

This and that

Best shooter: Kristina Divjak, Northwestern

Best rebounder: Andrea Garner, Penn State

Best defender: Stacey Thomas, Michigan

Best playmaker: Stephanie White-McCarty, Purdue

On the rise: Penn State. Rene Portland's program is back in the national spotlight after winning last season's WNIT with help from Big Ten all-freshman players Lisa Shepherd and Maren Walseth.

Best bet: Iowa, which has finished in the bottom half of the Big Ten only once since 1984, will not reach the .500 mark in the league.

Odds and ends: After two surgeries, Ohio State's Marrita Porter has a steel rod in each leg. But the senior still has enough leaping ability to reach an inch and a half over the rim. ... Ohio State is another team on the rise, with all five starters back, including Porter, and a strong recruiting class. ... Indiana's Kristi Green led the nation in free-throw shooting percentage last year with a 90.8 mark. ... Seven teams have a realistic opportunity to end their season in the NCAA tourney. ... At Penn State, Rene and Christine Portland form the only current mother-daughter/coach-player relationship in Division I. Rene Portland, in her 19th season at State College, has her top four scorers back, led by Andrea Garner. ... Northwestern had its first losing Big Ten season of the '90s last season. Don Perrelli's club should get back on track behind smooth-shooting Kristina Divjak and tenacious senior guard Megan Chawansky. ... The conference has led the nation in attendance in each of the past six seasons. Last year, it averaged an NCAA-record 4,139 fans a game. Wisconsin, Purdue, Iowa and Penn State all rank in the top 11. —Doug Herakovich

5. BIG 12

Predicted order of finish

North	South
1. Kansas	1. Texas Tech
2. Iowa State	2. Baylor
3. Colorado	3. Texas
4. Nebraska	4. Oklahoma State
5. Missouri	5. Texas A&M
6. Kansas State	6. Oklahoma

Preseason all-conference

First team

C Angie Brazier, 6-3, Sr., Texas Tech

F Phylesha Whaley, 5-10, Jr., Oklahoma

G Stacy Frese, 5-8, Jr., Iowa State

G/F Lynn Pride, 6-2, Jr., Kansas

G Lara Webb, 5-10, Sr., Baylor

Second team

F Kesha Bonds, 6-2, Sr., Missouri

F Kacy Moffitt, 6-4, Sr., Baylor

F Prissy Sharpe, 6-1, Jr., Texas A&M

G Rene Hanebutt, 5-8, Sr., Texas Tech

G Nicole Kubik, 5-10, Jr., Nebraska

Newcomer of the year: C Britt Hartshorn, 6-4, Fr., Colorado

This and that

Best shooter: Jennifer Crow, Oklahoma State

Best rebounder: Kesha Bonds, Missouri

Best defender: Nicole Kubik, Nebraska

Best playmaker: Stacy Frese, Iowa State

Team on the rise: Baylor. In her fourth year at Baylor, coaching legend Sonja Hogg led the school to its best season in 16 years (20-11 and WNIT finals). She returns a solid combo in guards Toya Ellis and Lara Webb and post Kacy Moffitt. But the schedule is tough. ... Colorado's 12-16 record last season was the program's first losing mark since '84-85. Expect it to rebound after a second-consecutive top-10 recruiting class.

Best bets: Texas A&M, under new coach Peggie Gillom, and Missouri, under new coach Cindy Stein, should be much improved. Missouri returns former Big 12 freshmen of the year Kesha Bonds and Julie Helm.

Odds and ends: Kansas State, which returns five of its top six players, lost six games by five points or less last season; K-State led 13 games at the half but finished 7-6 in those games. ... In his first season at Nebraska, Paul Sanderford led the Huskers to 23 wins and a 16-0 home record. Even with the loss of Anna DeForge, the Huskers could make the North a four-team race with a strong junior class and post game. ... Texas' Jody Conradt, winningest women's basketball coach ever (709-210), was elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame over the summer. ... Cindy Stein, who replaces 422-game winner Joann Rutherford at Missouri, set a Division II record by leading Emporia State to 33 consecutive wins before losing to North Dakota 92-76 in the D-II championship. —Michelle Smith

6. BIG EAST

Predicted order of finish

1. Connecticut	8. Providence
2. Rutgers	9. Georgetown
3. Notre Dame	10. Seton Hall
4. Miami	11. Pittsburgh
5. Boston College	12. West Virginia
6. Villanova	13. St. John's
7. Syracuse	

Preseason all-conference

First team

F/C Kym Hope, 6-2, Sr., Miami

C/F Paige Sauer, 6-5, Jr., Connecticut

G Cal Bouchard, 5-7, Jr., Boston College

G Natasha Pointer, 5-6, Soph., Rutgers

G Tomora Young, 5-10, Sr., Rutgers

Second team

F Svetlana Abrosimova, 6-1, Soph., Connecticut

C Ruth Riley, 6-5, Soph., Notre Dame

F Whitney Steele, 6-4, Sr., Boston College

G/F Linda Miles, 6-0, Soph., Rutgers

G Gina Graziani, 5-8, Jr., Miami

Newcomer of the year: G Katie Smrcka-Duffy, 5-9, Soph., Georgetown

This and that

Best shooter: Cal Bouchard, Boston College

Best rebounder: Kym Hope, Miami

Best defender: Natasha Pointer, Rutgers

Best playmaker: Gina Graziani, Miami

On the rise: Most of the conference. At the top, Rutgers has made a big leap and Notre Dame has continued its climb. Miami and Boston College also have raised their play.

Best bet: Connecticut will extend its record-setting string of 30-plus-victory seasons to six. No other program, men's or women's, has enjoyed five consecutive 30-win campaigns.

Odds and ends: Seton Hall standout Danielle Golay has transferred to Southern California. ... Connecticut, Miami and Rutgers had 9-0 league records at home last year. Notre Dame was 8-1 in South Bend. ... Boston College led the nation in 3-point field-goal percentage last year at 41.0 percent. ... UConn coach Geno Auriemma likely will bring the conference title to Storrs for a sixth consecutive year, and he will rely heavily on a top-ranked recruiting class that includes prep player of the year Tamika Williams. ... The prize recruiting class last season went to Rutgers, and late in the year the players proved their mettle. The Knights handed UConn its third conference loss in five years, then they fell to Tennessee in the Sweet 16. Natasha Pointer, Linda Miles and Tammy Sutton-Brown are sophomores, and senior Tomora Young provides scoring and savvy. ... Kym Hope is back to fuel Miami's run for a second consecutive NCAA tourney bid. Hope is the conference's top returning scorer (17.6 ppg) and rebounder (10.6 rpg). —Doug Herakovich

7. SUN BELT

Predicted order of finish

1. Louisiana Tech
2. Florida International
3. Western Kentucky
4. Arkansas State
5. Southwestern Louisiana
6. South Alabama
7. New Orleans

Preseason all-conference

First team

C Vasso Beskaki, 6-8, Sr., New Orleans

F Tiffany Green, 5-11, Sr., Southwestern Louisiana

F Amanda Wilson, 6-0, Sr., Louisiana Tech

G Dalma Ivanyi, 5-10, Sr., Florida International

G Tamicha Jackson, 5-5, Jr., Louisiana Tech

Second team

F Shea Lunsford, 6-2, Sr., Western Kentucky

F Monica Maxwell, 5-9, Sr., Louisiana Tech

G/F Jenny Anderson, 6-0, Sr., New Orleans

G Julie Hagood, 5-9, Jr., Arkansas State

G LaQuan Stallworth, 5-6, Sr., Louisiana Tech

Newcomer of the year: C Takeisha Lewis, 6-2, Fr., Louisiana Tech

This and that

Best shooter: Julie Hagood, Arkansas State

Best rebounder: Amanda Wilson, Louisiana Tech

Best defender: LaQuan Stallworth, Louisiana Tech

Best playmaker: Dalma Ivanyi, Florida International

On the rise: Southwestern Louisiana. Last season's 9-18 record was stellar in comparison to recent years. The program had totaled nine wins the previous three seasons and hasn't posted a winning record since 1987-88. Freshmen accounted for 54.2 percent of USL's scoring last season.

Best bets: Louisiana Tech's nation's-best home-court winning streak of 52 games will end November 30, when Tennessee visits. ... Arkansas State has six 20-win seasons since 1990 but has yet to go to the NCAA tourney. With Julie Hagood and

top rebounder Christina Barry, as well as host duties for the conference tournament, this could be the year.

Odds and ends: The Sun Belt is undergoing dramatic changes. Florida International is in, weak links Lamar and Texas-Pan American are out. Arkansas-Little Rock will restart its program for 1999-2000 and will be joined by newcomer Denver (whose closest Sun Belt foe will be about 1,000 miles away). ... FIU will represent itself well in its new conference, thanks mostly to Dalma Ivanyi, who may be the best point guard in the nation. FIU forward Jana Ciperova will miss the first half of the season with a torn ACL. ... The last time Tennessee beat LaTech in an NCAA title game (1987), the Techsters won the national title the next season. ... Western Kentucky coach Steve Small recorded the most wins of any first-year coach last year, leading the team to a 26-9 mark. —Michelle Smith

8. CONFERENCE USA

Predicted order of finish

American	National
1. Louisville	1. Memphis
2. Marquette	2. Tulane
3. UNC Charlotte	3. Southern Miss
4. DePaul	4. South Florida
5. Cincinnati	5. Houston
6. St. Louis	6. UAB

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Sharon Bellamy, 6-2, Sr., Louisville
F Tamika Whitmore, 6-2, Sr., Memphis
 F Abbie Willenborg, 6-1, Jr., Marquette
 G Grace Daley, 5-8, Jr., Tulane
 G Jill Morton, 5-5, Jr., Louisville

Second team

F Sharonda Lasseter, 6-3, Soph., Houston
 F Lisa Oldenburg, 6-2, Jr., Marquette
 F Doris Scott, 6-1, Sr., Cincinnati
 G Yolanda Reed, 5-8, Jr., Memphis
 G Jill Morton, 5-5, Jr., Louisville

Newcomer of the year: C Ann Wauters, 6-6, Fr., Tulane

This and that

Best shooter: Tamika Whitmore, Memphis

Best rebounder: Abbie Willenborg, Marquette

Best defender: Grace Daley, Tulane

Best playmaker: Yolanda Reed, Memphis

On the rise: UNC Charlotte.

Best bets: Keep an eye on these players this season: UAB's Kim Brown, who averaged 13 points and 14 rebounds the last five games after averaging 2.3 of both the first 24 games; Southern Miss' Angela Atterberry, who had a team-high 53 steals a season after knee surgery; UNCC's Adrienne Jordan, who was No. 2 in C-USA in blocks (43) while playing just 12 minutes a game; and Louisville senior Roschelle Bullock, an Auburn transfer who earned league sixth-player-of-the-year honors.

Odds and ends: Joe Curl takes over at Houston, where the last three first-year coaches had winning records. He will need a nine-game turnaround to accomplish that. ... In the first season of the two-division format, the American Division was 20-16 vs. the National. ... Memphis became the first

conference team to win the outright regular-season title and the tourney title, giving it at least a regular-season or tourney title each of the past four years.

... UNCC returns seven of its top eight scorers, including leading scorer Nikki Richardson. ... Southern Miss coach Kay James needs eight wins to reach 400 at the school. ... St. Louis went 13-14 last season, the most wins since 1985-86. It also marked the third consecutive season the record has improved under Jill Pizzotti. ... Marquette juniors Abbie Willenborg and Lisa Oldenburg ranked in the conference's top 10 in scoring and rebounding last year. —Michelle Smith

9. WESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

Predicted order of finish

Pacific	Mountain
1. New Mexico	1. Colorado State
2. Hawaii	2. SMU
3. Utah	3. Rice
4. BYU	4. TCU
5. San Diego State	5. Tulsa
6. UTEP	6. Wyoming
7. Fresno State	7. UNLV
8. San Jose State	8. Air Force

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Katie Cronin, 6-0, Sr., Colorado State
 F Kirra Jordan, 6-0, Jr., Rice
 F Karlin Kennedy, 6-1, Jr., SMU
G Becky Hammon, 5-6, Sr., Colorado State
 G Kylie Page, 6-0, Jr., Hawaii

Second team

F Leela Farr, 5-11, Soph., Tulsa
 F Heather Haanen, 5-11, Soph., Colorado State
 F Jennifer Williams, 6-0, Soph., New Mexico
 G Marla Brumfield, 5-9, Jr., Rice
 G BJ Itoman, 5-5, Sr., Hawaii

Newcomer of the year: F Erin Hansen, 6-3, Fr., Utah

This and that

Best shooter: Kylie Page, Hawaii

Best rebounder: Karlin Kennedy, SMU

Best defender: Charonda Wilson, Rice

Best playmaker: Becky Hammon, Colorado State

Team on the rise: Colorado State

Best bets: With four returning starters, Rice is destined to reach the NCAA Tournament for the first time in school history. Last year's WNIT berth was the school's first-ever postseason appearance.

Odds and ends: There are several new coaches, including Fresno State's Britt King, who became the first black head coach in any sport in the school's history. ... Former Old Dominion assistant Cindy Fisher takes over at Wyoming, where the team posted its fewest wins since 1987-88. ... As far as twin guard duos go, Georgia's Kelly and Coco Miller garnered most of the recognition last year. But TCU's Jill and Amy Sutton also had a great freshman year. Jill was the Pacific Division newcomer of the year, and the two finished 1-2 on the team in scoring. ... With the loss of four starters, Utah returns just 26 percent of its scoring from a 21-6 team. ... New Mexico loses its scoring, rebounding and assist leader from last year's 26-7 team. —Michelle Smith

10. ATLANTIC 10

Predicted order of finish

East	West
1. Massachusetts	1. George Washington
2. St. Joseph's	2. Virginia Tech
3. St. Bonaventure	3. Xavier
4. Rhode Island	4. Duquesne
5. Fordham	5. LaSalle
6. Temple	6. Dayton

Preseason all-conference

First team

F Noelia Gomez, 6-3, Sr., George Washington
 F Hilary Waltman, 5-10, Sr., St. Bonaventure
 F Tere Williams, 5-11, Soph., Virginia Tech
 G Elisa Aguilar, 5-8, Jr., George Washington
 G Angela Zampella, 5-7, Jr., St. Joseph's

Second team

C Amber Jansen, 6-2, Soph., Rhode Island
 F Tez Kraft, 5-11, Sr., Massachusetts
 F Malyssa Thorngren, 5-11, Sr., Fordham
 G Christi Hester, 5-9, Jr., Dayton
 G Nikki Kremer, 5-9, Jr., Xavier

Newcomer of the year: G Kristeena Alexander, 5-6, Soph., GW

This and that

Best shooter: Kelly Eberhardt, Duquesne

Best rebounder: Tere Williams, Virginia Tech

Best defender: Chasity Myers, George Washington

Best playmaker: Lisa Witherspoon, Virginia Tech

On the rise: Virginia Tech. In her first season as coach, Bonnie Henrickson had Virginia Tech rolling through the second half of last season en route to a 22-10 record. She is clearly one of the nation's finest young coaches.

Best bet: George Washington reached the Elite Eight in the '97 NCAA Tournament. With five starters back, including Spain's Elisa Aguilar and Noelia Gomez, they may well reach that level again in March.

Odds and ends: Xavier's Jennifer Phillips earned A-10 all-rookie team honors last year, but that wasn't her greatest achievement. On September 24, Phillips had open heart surgery to correct a congenital heart condition. Less than three months later, she played her first game for Xavier. ... Noelia Gomez is the first George Washington player to reach the 1,000-point plateau in two seasons. ... After earning '96-97 CAA rookie of the year honors at George Mason, guard Kristeena Alexander transferred to GW and will be eligible the second semester. ... UMass returns its top three scorers from a team that won 19 games. ... The graduation of forward Maureen Costello will slow St. Joseph's, but four starters return from last year's 19-12 team. Guards Angela Zampella and Melissa Coursey will lead the way for the Hawks as they chase Massachusetts in the East. —Doug Herakovich

TSN

Michelle Smith is a writer in the San Francisco area who makes frequent contributions to the San Francisco Examiner. Doug Herakovich, editor of The Women's Basketball Journal, has been writing about women's basketball for more than 15 years.

THE SPORTING NEWS PRIME PROSPECTS

THE SPORTING NEWS asked five top recruiting analysts to provide lists of the top 100 high school seniors in the nation. We assigned each player a number based on each analyst's ranking (100 points for a No. 1 ranking, 99 for a No. 2 and so on) and came up with this master list. The number that follows each player is each analyst's ranking:
KEY: VC—Van Coleman; BO—Brick Oettinger; RU—Recurring USA; BG—Bob Gibbons; SW—Stephen Wacaser.

Rk.	Name	Ht.	City/High school	VC	BO	RU	BG	SW	Rk.	Name	Ht.	City/High school	VC	BO	RU	BG	SW
1.	Donnell Harvey	6-7	Cuthbert, Ga./Randolph-Clay	1	2	3	3	2	51.	Matt Carroll	6-5	Horsham, Pa./Hatboro-Horsham	65	42	—	30	41
2.	Keith Bogans	6-4	Hyattsville, Md./DeMatha Catholic	2	1	2	6	1	52.	Travis Watson	6-7	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Acad.	78	53	64	57	61
3.	Jason Williams	6-2	Metuchen, N.J./St. Joseph's	5	10	9	7	3	53.	Hollis Price	6-0	New Orleans/St. Augustine	46	52	—	82	35
4.	Marvin Stone	6-10	Huntsville, Ala./Grissom	3	9	5	13	9	54.	Brent Darby	6-0	River Rouge, Miss./River Rouge	75	51	73	58	65
5.	Jason Kapon	6-8	Lakewood, Calif./Artesia	13	4	13	11	4	55.	Julian Swartz	6-6	Waukesha, Wisc./South	30	59	—	85	48
6.	Jonathan Bender	6-11	Picayune, Miss./Picayune	12	17	4	12	5	56.	Ezra Williams	6-3	Marietta, Ga./Marietta	45	43	—	86	62
7.	DerMarr Johnson	6-9	Pittsfield, Maine/Maine Central Institute	4	15	1	16	15	57.	Ronald Dupree	6-6	Biloxi, Miss./Biloxi	—	—	62	37	37
8.	Jason Parker	6-8	Charlotte/West Charlotte	22	3	19	9	6	58.	Leland Anderson	6-9	Attleboro, Mass./Attleboro	38	70	91	73	75
9.	Brett Nelson	6-3	St. Albans, W.Va./St. Albans	8	5	22	22	7		Aloysius Anagoyne	6-6	Detroit/St. Martin DePorres	51	—	50	61	84
10.	Brian Cook	6-10	Lincoln, Ill./Lincoln Community	6	8	8	33	10	60.	Kirk Hinrich	6-2	Sioux City, Iowa/West	39	—	67	100	46
11.	Carlos Boozer	6-8	Juneau, Alaska/Douglas	9	6	6	34	12	61.	DeShaun Williams	6-3	Paterson, N.J./Paterson Catholic	43	99	46	65	—
12.	Joe Forte	6-4	Hyattsville, Md./DeMatha Catholic	10	19	12	10	17	62.	John Stewart	7-0	Indianapolis/Lawrence North	48	57	—	—	57
13.	Leon Smith	6-10	Chicago/Martin Luther King	25	12	15	4	14	63.	George Leach	6-10	Charlotte/Olympic	41	73	79	—	72
14.	Damien Wilkins	6-5	Kensington, Md./Newport	14	21	7	21	24	64.	Roger Mason	6-3	Wheaton, Md./Good Counsel	—	63	77	44	82
15.	LaVell Blanchard	6-6	Ann Arbor, Mich./Pioneer	16	30	41	1	8	65.	Jamario Moon	6-7	Rockford, Ala./Coosa Central	86	46	56	—	80
16.	Jason Gardner	5-11	Indianapolis/North Central	15	18	27	20	18	66.	Stephane Pelle	6-9	Mercersburg, Pa./Mercersburg Acad.	98	—	63	41	69
17.	Samuel Dalembert	6-11	Elizabeth, N.J./St. Patrick	18	11	25	26	22	67.	Jamal Crawford	6-4	Seattle/Rainier Beach	69	—	10	94	—
18.	Jason Richardson	6-6	Saginaw, Mich./Arthur Hill	24	16	42	8	13	68.	Tahj Holden	6-9	Little River, N.J./Red Bank Regional	—	65	—	56	53
19.	Casey Sanders	6-10	Tampa/Tampa Prep	7	7	20	47	28	69.	Jon Oden	6-8	Phoenix/Carl Hayden	68	87	90	64	68
20.	Kenny Satterfield	6-2	New York/Rice	31	23	16	19	21	70.	Todd Billet	6-0	Lincroft, N.J./Christian Brothers Academy	66	92	—	48	76
21.	Nick Collison	6-9	Iowa Falls, Iowa/Iowa Falls	17	24	60	2	11	71.	Jon Higgins	6-3	Shaker Heights, Ohio/Shaker Heights	52	90	—	55	88
22.	Marshall Williams	6-5	Milwaukee/Vincent	28	34	18	23	36		Ronald Slay	6-7	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Acad.	73	93	—	53	66
	Casey Jacobsen	6-6	Glendora, Calif./Glendora	20	13	45	35	26	73.	Brian Jackson	6-10	Astoria, Ore./Knappa	—	—	88	45	52
24.	Kevin Gaines	6-3	Las Vegas/Clark	29	29	33	24	30		Antonio Latimer	6-9	Winchendon, Mass./Winchendon School	—	44	—	—	40
	Tony Robertson	6-2	Barrington, R.I./St. Andrew's	23	22	29	40	31	75.	Shane Schilling	6-6	Minnetonka, Minn./Minnetonka	32	72	—	83	—
26.	Roderick Grizzard	6-6	Birmingham, Ala./Central Park Christian	21	27	21	54	23	76.	Shawson Johnson	6-8	Shreveport, La./Glen Oaks	87	56	84	—	64
27.	Andrew Gooden	6-10	El Cerrito, Calif./El Cerrito	49	33	28	14	25	77.	Tony Bobbitt	6-4	Daytona Beach, Fla./Mainland	100	76	44	—	78
28.	Michael Dunleavy	6-6	Portland/Jesuit	58	20	54	5	19	78.	Clifford Crawford	6-3	Winston-Salem, N.C./Parkland	—	61	94	84	58
29.	Derrick Payne	6-6	Durham, N.C./Mount Zion Christian	42	25	24	39	33	79.	Brian Woodward	6-2	Bayside, N.Y./Cardozo	—	67	57	88	86
30.	Joe Johnson	6-6	Little Rock, Ark./Central	36	50	43	15	20	80.	Curtis Borchardt	6-9	Redmond, Wash./Eastlake	—	71	82	52	—
31.	Steve Hunter	6-11	Durham, N.C./Mount Zion Christian	35	74	14	27	29		Tim Lyles	5-11	Durham, N.C./Mount Zion Christian	50	60	—	—	95
32.	Matt Bonner	6-9	Concord, N.H./Concord	27	28	39	46	56	82.	Courtland Freeman	6-9	Myrtle Beach, S.C./Socastee	34	85	—	—	87
33.	Donnell Knight	6-7	Phoenix/St. Mary's	19	40	93	29	16	83.	Marque Perry	6-0	Chicago/Prosser	—	—	—	49	60
34.	George Williams	6-8	Missouri City, Texas/Elkins	44	48	38	36	44	84.	Nick Horvath	6-10	Arden Hills, Minn./Mounds View	63	79	—	—	77
35.	Majestic Mapp	6-1	Bronx, N.Y./St. Raymond's	26	26	69	38	54	85.	Marcus Cox	6-2	Bridgeport, Conn./Kolbe Cathedral	—	—	47	72	—
36.	Kareem Rush	6-5	Kansas City, Mo./Pembroke Hill	11	14	59	—	32	86.	Demetrius Hunter	6-2	Las Vegas/Chevenne	83	—	92	78	71
37.	Antonio Falu	6-5	Houston/Waltrip	64	47	36	28	47		Adam Wolfe	6-9	Westerville, Ohio/South	—	—	—	43	79
38.	Caron Butler	6-6	Prep school to be determined	37	41	11	—	42	88.	Richard Wright	6-6	East Chicago, Ind./Central	82	—	—	90	51
39.	Doug Wrenn	6-7	Milford, Conn./Milford Academy	33	32	31	—	38	89.	Justin Davis	6-8	Alameda, Calif./St. Joseph	93	—	55	79	—
40.	Mike Bauer	6-7	Hastings, Minn./Hastings	55	58	40	32	55	90.	Nathan Hair	6-5	Mission Viejo, Calif./Capistrano Valley	—	—	—	25	—
41.	Kenny Walker	6-8	Jacksonville/Wolfson	53	45	53	42	50	91.	Mark Jarrell-Wright	6-5	Newark, N.J./St. Benedict's	—	—	58	68	—
42.	Brian Wethers	6-5	Murrieta, Calif./Murrieta Valley	56	35	23	77	59	92.	Nick Vanderlaan	6-10	Oakdale, Conn./St. Thomas More	96	—	32	—	—
43.	Chuck Eidson	6-7	Summerville, S.C./Pinewood Academy	70	36	89	17	39	93.	Rafael Berumen	6-9	Simi Valley, Calif.	—	—	30	—	—
44.	Ronald Blackshear	6-4	Chatham, Va./Hargrave Military Acad.	40	31	49	—	34	94.	Brooks Hall	6-5	Troy, Ohio/Troy	—	—	72	67	94
	Josh Moore	7-1	Jersey City, N.J./St. Anthony	54	37	68	51	45	95.	Demario Hooper	6-5	Texarkana, Texas/Texas	—	—	—	62	70
46.	Reese Gaines	6-4	Madison, Wisc./West	77	55	17	50	63	96.	Dalron Johnson	6-8	Los Angeles, Calif./Verbum Dei	—	—	34	—	—
47.	Steven Blake	6-3	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Acad.	71	39	—	18	49	97.	Marques Williams	6-8	Durham, N.C./Mount Zion	—	—	35	—	—
48.	Tito Maddox	6-4	Compton, Calif./Compton	—	91	26	31	43	98.	Gavin Groninger	6-5	Plainfield, Ind./Plainfield	—	81	—	69	89
	Wesley Wilson	6-10	Pittsfield, Maine/Maine Central Institute	61	38	65	—	27	99.	Derrick Zimmerman	6-2	Monroe, La./Wossman	—	—	37	—	—
50.	Andrew Sullivan	6-7	Richland, N.J./St. Augustine	57	62	52	59	67	100.	Josh Howard	6-7	Chatham, Va./Hargrave Military Acad.	—	66	—	—	73



Brian Cook (above, ranked 10th), from Lincoln, Ill., and Marshall Williams (22nd), from Milwaukee, are two of the top 25 seniors in the nation.

CONSENSUS TOP HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS

Rk.	Name	Ht.	City/High school
1.	Alton Ford	6-6	Houston/Milby
2.	Marcus Taylor	6-3	East Lansing, Mich./Waverly
3.	DeShawn Stevenson	6-5	Fresno, Calif./Washington Union
4.	Imari Sawyer	6-1	Chicago/King
5.	Omar Cook	6-1	Middleville, N.Y./Christ the King
6.	Zach Randolph	6-8	Marion, Ind./Marion
7.	Darius Miles	6-8	East St. Louis, Ill./East St. Louis
8.	Reo Logan	6-9	Country Club Hills, Ill./Hillcrest
9.	Jerome Harper	6-4	Columbia, S.C./Keenan
10.	Chris Duhon	6-2	Slidell, La./Salmen
11.	Taliek Brown	5-11	Astoria, N.Y./St. John's Prep
12.	Cliff Hawkins	6-2	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Academy
13.	Nick Anderson	6-7	Baton Rouge, La./Southern Lab
14.	Luke Whitehead	6-6	San Francisco/St. Ignatius
15.	Justin Reed	6-6	Jackson, Miss./Provine
16.	Jared Jeffries	6-9	Bloomington, Ind./North
17.	Scooter Sherrill	6-3	Mount Ulla, N.C./West Rowan
18.	Scott Hazelton	6-7	Lawrence, Mass./Lawrence Central Catholic
19.	Eddie Griffin	6-7	Philadelphia/Roman Catholic
20.	Demetrius Smith	6-3	Hogansville, Ga./Callaway

CONSENSUS TOP HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES

Rk.	Name	Ht.	City/High school
1.	Robert Whaley	6-8	Benton Harbor, Mich./Benton Harbor
2.	Tyson Chandler	7-0	Compton, Calif./Dominguez
3.	Dajuan Wagner	6-2	Camden, N.J./Camden
4.	Eddy Curry	6-10	Dolton, Ill./Thornwood
5.	Rashard Carruth	6-2	College Park, Ga./Cathedral
6.	Kelvin Torbert	6-2	Flint, Mich./Northwestern
7.	Apolinar Fernandez	6-8	Artesia, Calif./Lakewood
8.	Brandon Bender	6-9	Louisville, Ky./Ballard
9.	Jonathan Hargett	5-11	Highland Springs, Va./Highland Springs
10.	Dennis Latimore	6-8	Halstead, Kan./Halstead

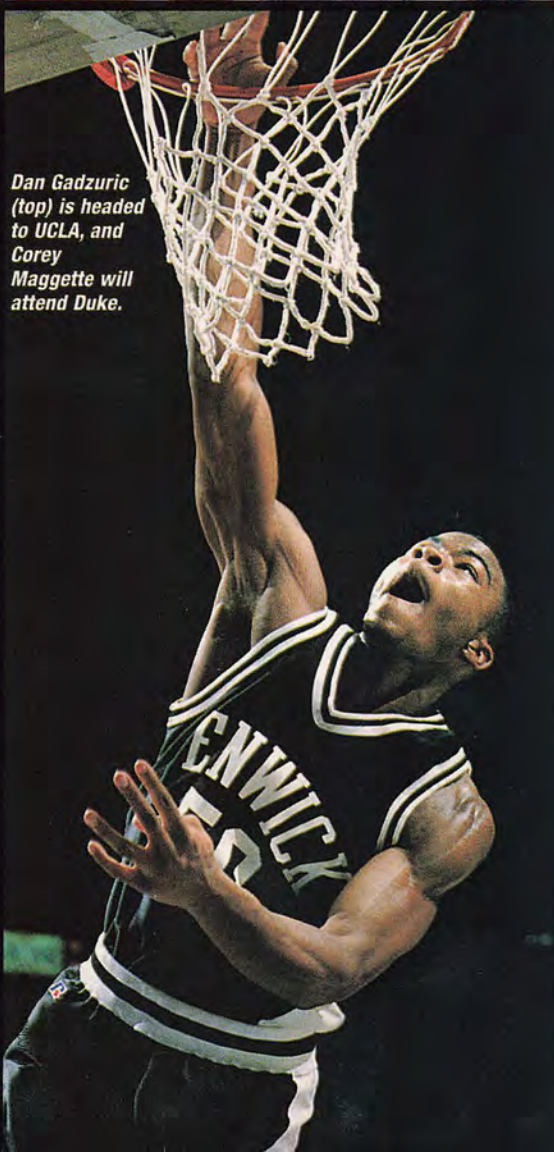
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WHERE THE CONSENSUS TOP 50 FRESHMEN SIGNED

Rk.	Name	Ht.	City/High school	College Choice
1.	Dan Gadzuric*	6-11	Byfield, Mass./Governor Dummer Academy	UCLA
2.	Quentin Richardson*	6-6	Chicago/Whitney Young	DePaul
3.	Vincent Yarbrough*	6-7	Cleveland, Tenn./Cleveland	Tennessee
4.	Ronald Curry*	6-3	Hampton, Va./Hampton	North Carolina
5.	JaRon Rush*	6-7	Kansas City, Mo./Pembroke Hill	UCLA
6.	Jason Capel*	6-8	Frederick, Md./St. John's @ Prospect Hall	North Carolina
7.	Erick Barkley*	6-1	Pittsfield, Maine/Maine Central Institute	St. John's
8.	Joel Przybilla*	7-0	Monticello, Minn./Monticello	Minnesota
9.	Keyon Dooling*	6-3	Ft. Lauderdale, Fla./Dillard	Missouri
10.	Corey Maggette*	6-6	Oak Park, Ill./Fenwick	Duke
11.	Mike Miller*	6-8	Mitchell, S.D./Mitchell	Florida
12.	Michael Wright*	6-8	Chicago/Farragut	Arizona
13.	Jerome Moiso*	6-11	Milford, Conn./Milford Academy	UCLA
14.	Tyrus Boswell*	6-7	Winchendon, Mass./The Winchendon School	Mississippi State
15.	Dane Fife*	6-4	Clarkston, Mich./Clarkston	Indiana
16.	Stromile Swift	6-9	Shreveport, La./Fair Park	LSU
17.	Lloyd Price	6-5	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Academy	Xavier
18.	Bobby Simmons*	6-7	Chicago/Simeon	DePaul
19.	Tayshaun Prince	6-7	Compton, Calif./Dominguez	Kentucky
20.	Darius Songaila	6-9	New Hampton, N.H./New Hampton Prep	Wake Forest
21.	Joey Range*	6-4	Galesburg, Ill./Galesburg	Iowa
22.	Adam Harrington*	6-4	Northfield, Mass./Pioneer Valley Regional	NC State
23.	Ray Young*	6-4	Alameda, Calif./St. Joseph	UCLA
24.	Kevin Lyde	6-10	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Academy	Temple
25.	Rasual Butler	6-7	Philadelphia/Roman Catholic	La Salle
26.	Jules Camara	6-11	Mouth of Wilson, Va./Oak Hill Academy	Kentucky
27.	Lance Williams	6-9	Chicago/Julian	DePaul
28.	Troy Murphy	6-10	Morristown, N.J./Delbarton	Notre Dame
29.	Anthony Glover	6-6	New York/Rice	St. John's
30.	Richard Jefferson	6-8	Phoenix/Moon Valley	Arizona
31.	Travis Robinson	6-8	Durham, N.C./Mount Zion Christian	Undecided
32.	Frankie Williams	6-4	Peoria, Ill./Manual	Illinois
33.	Ted Dupay	5-10	Cape Coral, Fla./Mariner	Florida
34.	Anthony Bland	6-4	Los Angeles/Westchester	Syracuse
35.	Danny Miller*	6-8	Mt. Holly, N.J./Rancocas Valley	Maryland
36.	Ruben Douglas	6-5	Burbank, Calif./Bellarmine-Jefferson	Arizona
37.	Paris London	6-8	Memphis, Tenn./Hamilton	Memphis
38.	Frederick Jones	6-3	Gresham, Ore./Barlow	Oregon
39.	Tony Kitchings	6-10	South Aiken, S.C./South Aiken	South Carolina
40.	Fred Primus*	6-3	Middleburg, Va./Notre Dame Academy	Pittsburgh
41.	B.B. Waldon	6-7	Lakeland, Fla./Kathleen	South Florida
42.	Robert Jackson	6-8	Milwaukee/Washington	Mississippi State
43.	Keith Bean	6-8	Pittsfield, Maine/Maine Central Institute	NC State
44.	Kris Lang	6-10	Gastonia, N.C./Hunter Huss	North Carolina
45.	Eugene Land	6-7	Cincinnati/Roger Bacon	Cincinnati
46.	Sam Clancy Jr.	6-7	Lakewood, Ohio/St. Edwards	USC
47.	Chris Jeffries	6-8	Fresno, Calif./Washington Union	Arkansas
48.	Dahntay Jones	6-5	Hamilton Square, N.J./Steinert	Rutgers
49.	Broderick Hicks	6-1	Houston/Strake Jesuit	Wake Forest
50.	Senque Carey	6-4	Mountain View, Calif./St. Francis	Washington

*—All five analysts considered player a top 50 signee.



Dan Gadzuric (top) is headed to UCLA, and Corey Maggette will attend Duke.

PETER NEWCOMB FOR TSN

INSIDE VIEW

BY DAN WETZEL

Here is a look at five of the top prospects in the Class of 1999.

• **Jonathan Bender, 6-11, Picayune, Miss./Picayune Memorial High.**

Strengths: The lithe Bender is an exceptional athlete, capable of running the court effortlessly. He is dominant in transition, where he fills lanes, can handle and finish with authority. Has a reasonable jump shot and is difficult to defend on the perimeter because of his size. He can simply shoot over most players. He reminds some observers of a raw Kevin Garnett or Scottie Pippen.

Weaknesses: His No. 1 weakness is his weakness. Bender is only about 200 pounds, and he needs to add weight, muscle and mass. Bender is also too reliant on his perimeter skills; he tends to shy away from inside battles and rebounding, where his long arms could make him effective. He needs to work on his post moves and defensive positioning. He also needs to concentrate on being a forward, not a guard.

Schools: Mississippi State, Memphis, Louisiana State, Kentucky, Arkansas, North Carolina State.

• **Keith Bogans, 6-5, Hyattsville, Md./DeMatha Catholic.**

Strengths: He is a true scorer. Bogans is capable of beating guys off the dribble and taking it to the lane, but he also can spot up and hit the open jump shot. In today's game, that is an increasingly rare combination. As you'd expect of a student of DeMatha's Morgan Wootten, he has a great understanding of the game and loves to lock up opponents defensively. Bogans is a winner, a courageous player who wants the ball down the stretch but isn't obsessed with his numbers. He reminds some of Ray Allen.

Weaknesses: Not many, Bogans may be the most fundamentally sound player in the class. Like all young players, he could stand to get stronger, but he has a decent build for his size and game.

Schools: Kentucky, Michigan, Duke.

• **Donnell Harvey, 6-7, Cuthbert, Ga./Randolph-Clay High.**

Strengths: Harvey is a terror in the paint, an old-school warrior. His great work ethic makes him unbeatable off the glass, even against taller and stronger players. Defensively, he is tough and comes to play every possession. He has decent touch around the hoop and some explosive post moves. Refreshingly, he knows what position he is—power forward—and isn't trying to become a shooting guard. He reminds some of a smaller Danny Fortson or Corliss Williamson.

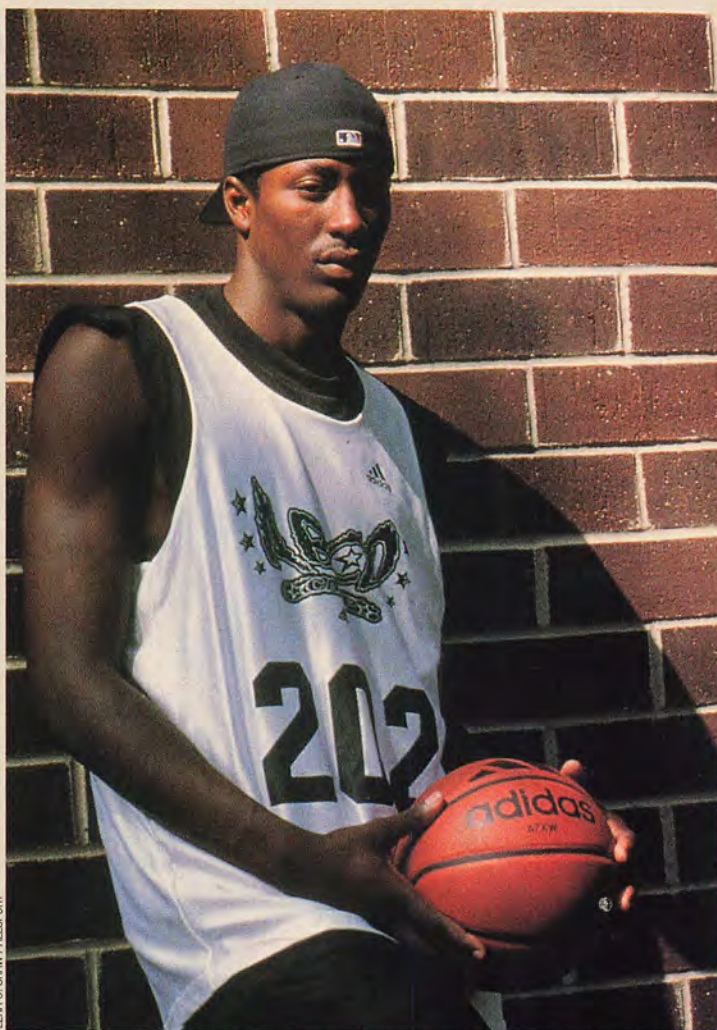
Weaknesses: Harvey needs to improve his face up game—particularly the range on his jump shot—without turning his back on what makes him great. To reach his potential, he needs to add some muscle.

Schools: Kentucky, Georgia, Georgia Tech.

• **DerMarr Johnson, 6-9, Pittsfield, Maine/Maine Central Institute.**

Strengths: Johnson has uncanny ballhandling skills for a player his size. He is most effective when he crosses over on a defender and blows by for a dunk. His jump shot is usually true, and his sheer athleticism make him an impact player on the court. Although accused of gliding, he has a fierce streak in him that, when aroused, makes him a formidable opponent. He has a desire to get better. He reminds some of a cross between Anfernee Hardaway and Scottie Pippen.

Weaknesses: Like Bender, Johnson needs to get tougher inside and use his wing span to snag rebounds. His understanding of the game needs work, although Johnson will benefit from the exceptional coaching of MCI's Max Goode, where he is transferring this season. Johnson's work ethic, consistency and inner drive need to improve because when he tries, he is superior player. He was the No. 1 player



Harvey, a power forward from southwestern Georgia, is the consensus No. 1 player in the country, says our panel of recruiting analysts.

in his class heading into his junior season but has slipped.

Schools: Michigan, Pittsburgh, Georgia Tech, UNC-Charlotte, Utah, Maryland.

• **Marvin Stone, 6-9, Huntsville, Ala./Grissom High.**

Strengths: His strength. Stone has shoulders wider than Alabama itself and a reach that makes him an effective rebounder and defender. Stone has the bulk to play a physical style—and the disposition to use it. On the offensive glass, he is efficient at turning boards into dunks. He has good touch around the hoop. Stone still is a raw talent, which makes his upside noteworthy. He is a classic power forward.

Weaknesses: Stone needs to learn how a game flows and improve his fundamentals. He can be beat by craftier and harder-working players, but that is fixable. The range on his shot needs work but, like Harvey, not at the expense of his efficient post game. Improving his focus to a full 40 minutes is imperative.

Schools: Kentucky, North Carolina, Florida State, Kansas, Tennessee.

TSN

Dan Wetzel is an associate editor with Basketball Times.

Great Expectations

JC transfer Shawn Marion is expected to add to the glitter and the glitz in Las Vegas

BY DAN WETZEL

For a couple of hundred years, Vincennes, Ind.—thanks to its location in the heart of the fertile Wabash River Valley—has produced some of the nation's finest corn and soybean crops. More recently—thanks to the local junior college, Vincennes University—it has churned out some of the nation's finest basketball products, including scores of college players and NBA stars such as Bob McAdoo (Class of 1971), Rickey Green (1975) and Eric Williams (1993).

It is the basketball bounty that most excites coaches such as UNLV's Bill Bayno. He harvested Vincennes two years ago and brought small forward Tyrone Nesby to the land of the casino, where Nesby was a two-year starter. Last fall, Bayno returned and signed what some are saying might be the legendary school's best-ever prospect—Shawn Marion, a gifted 6-7 small forward.

"One of my assistants, Glynn Cyprien, went to Vincennes to scout, and he told me they had another great player, one even better than Tyrone," Bayno says. "I knew right then I had to get down there."

What Bayno found was a long-armed, fleet-footed wing player with a jumper so sweet it could make honey jealous. Defensively, Marion covers great expanses of the court and loves intercepting passes, sprinting the length of the court and converting with some type of acrobatic jam. If that description reminds you a certain Chicago Bull, you aren't alone.

"Everyone compares me to Scottie Pippen," Marion says.

Marion's quickness is his best attribute. "I'm real fast," he says. "Everyone is always asking me if I run track. I'm so quick that I can get upcourt or to a ball immediately. That's why I get so many rebounds. I just get there first."

Marion is one of a number of JC transfers expected to have an immediate impact this season. At Maryland, Steve Francis' athleticism may push incumbent point man Terrell Stokes to the bench; a steady backcourt could be all the Terps need to make a deep run in the NCAA Tournament. Victor Avila is expected to start at center for Oklahoma, which could have the best frontcourt in the Big 12. St. John's expects solid contributions from off-guard Marvis "Bootsy" Thornton and center Albert Richardson. UConn is expecting instant offense off the bench from swingman Beau Archibald, who began his career at Utah State. East Carolina is excited about the potential of forward Evaldas Jocys. And forwards Gordon Scott (Idaho), Ashante Johnson (Kansas) and Pete Miceal (Cincinnati) are being counted on to produce big numbers right away. But Marion is the transfer with the most expectations.

There was speculation all winter that despite signing a national letter-of-intent to attend UNLV, Marion would decide to enter the 1998 NBA draft. In fact, a number of NBA teams sent scouts to watch Marion. Bulls general manager Jerry Krause even took in a Vincennes game at the NJCAA national tournament in March.

It was that tournament that helped cement Marion's decision. Although he averaged 23.5 points and 13.1 rebounds en route to being named first-team NJCAA All-American, Marion showed up at the tournament in Hutchinson, Kan., undecided as to what to do. But after Vincennes lost to Northwest Mississippi CC in the quarterfinals, Marion was convinced he wasn't ready. Although he would debate the decision for another month, his mind essentially was made up. He was headed to Vegas.

"I just realized I wasn't ready yet," Marion says. "I know I need to get stronger and work on my game. I thought we played well, but we just

couldn't win it. And I thought people would say, 'How can he go to the NBA when he didn't even lead Vincennes to a junior college national championship?'

"Now I want to silence everybody by leading UNLV to the NCAA national title."

No one would like that more than Bayno, who beat Kansas, Kentucky and Arizona in a heated recruiting battle for Marion. It was a nice recruiting victory, but Bayno knew dreams of the NBA still were in Marion's head.

"I didn't really worry about it until this spring," Bayno says. "He was considering going pro into April, and that was the toughest time. He had a lot of bad people in his ear that wanted him to go pro for them, not him. They wanted him to make them money."

"But he talked to a lot of NBA guys and they told him to stay in school. If he was going to be a lottery pick, I would have said, 'Shawn, go ahead.' But no one was telling us that. So I said, 'Shawn, here's why I think you should go to school, but I want you to make the decision. It's your decision; make it with your heart.'"

Marion says he had Vincennes coach Dan Sparks call around the NBA late in the season to gauge the league's interest. "Coach Sparks said no one would guarantee I would be a top 15 pick," Marion says. "He laid out my options. Coach Bayno told me my options also. He gave me the positives of going to the NBA and the positives of going Division I. He said he was behind whatever decision I made."

And so Bayno, a former assistant at Massachusetts, got his man.

"Shawn is really good," Bayno says. "He runs the floor better than any kid I've ever coached, including Marcus Camby. He is so fast that he just outruns guys up the court. It's incredible."

Marion grew up in Chicago, but moved with his family to Clarksville, Tenn., in 1992. He attended high school there and was an all-state selection as a senior. He considered scholarship offers from Tennessee, Memphis and Ole Miss, but academic shortcomings sent him to Vincennes. He says it was the best thing to happen to him.

"I really liked it at Vincennes," Marion says. "I fell in love with the place. Junior college basketball is better than most people think. It's a great experience."

He finished his career as the second-leading scorer in school history and was named the 1998 NJCAA Male Student Athlete of the Year.

Marion arrives in Vegas with high expectations. His performance at the Goodwill Games tryouts—where he was the last player cut—proved to everyone he can play with college basketball's best. He joins a UNLV team that lost in the first round of the NCAA Tournament but returns four starters. Marion will be part of a deep and talented frontcourt. Kevin Simmons will start at power forward, but his quickness allows him to play some on the perimeter. Kaspars Kambala and Issiah Epps will share time at center, and Kambala also can play power forward. Kambala is superb offensively, and Epps is a shot-blocking presence. If the Rebels can get consistent guard play, they could win the WAC.

"I used to watch the college games on TV last winter and see guys and say, 'I can do that. I can play with those guys,'" Marion says. "Now I have to step up and prove it. This is going to be a fun year at UNLV. Just watch."

TSN

Dan Wetzel is an associate editor for *Basketball Times*.

JUNIOR COLLEGE LISTS

BY RICK BALL, BALLSTARS J.C. CAMPS

TOP JUNIOR COLLEGE SOPHOMORES

POINT GUARDS

Rk.	Name	Ht.	School
1.	Jamie Rosser	6-2	Northwest Mississippi CC
2.	Thomas Watkins	6-0	Mesa (Ariz.) CC
3.	D.J. Wootson	5-11	Cecil CC (Md.)
4.	Taurus Cook	6-1	Hutchinson (Kan.) CC
5.	Lawrence Martin	5-10	Mississippi Gulf Coast JC
6.	Mike Garrett	6-0	Fresno (Calif.) City College

OFF-GUARDS

Rk.	Name	Ht.	School
1.	Antonio Jackson	6-5	Butler Co. (Kan.) CC
2.	Kenny Dye	6-2	Connors State College (Okla.)
3.	Donta Wade	6-2	Southeastern Illinois College
4.	Jeff Walker	6-4	Wabash Valley College (Ill.)
5.	Maurice Jeffers	6-4	Westark CC (Ark.)
6.	Chris Rogers	6-4	Bossier Parish (La.) CC

SMALL FORWARDS

Rk.	Name	Ht.	School
1.	James Zimmerman	6-6	Indian Hills CC (Iowa)
2.	Marcus Hicks	6-4	Bacone JC (Okla.)
3.	Paul McPherson	6-3	Kennedy-King College (Ill.)
4.	Rob Griffin	6-6	Southeastern CC (Iowa)
5.	Richard Evans	6-4	Kilgore (Texas) College
6.	Kerry Hendrickson	6-5	College of the Desert (Calif.)

POWER FORWARDS

Rk.	Name	Ht.	School
1.	Marcus Griffin	6-9	Lincoln (Ill.) College
2.	James Williams	6-9	Dixie College (Utah)
3.	Jermaine Small	6-9	Los Angeles City College
4.	Chris Anderson	6-10	Blinn College (Texas)
5.	Terry Black	6-6	Indian Hills CC (Iowa)
6.	Tyrone Evans	6-7	Garden City (Kan.) CC

CENTERS

Rk.	Name	Ht.	School
1.	Aleksander Radojevic	7-3	Barton Co. (Kan.) CC
2.	Raynell Brewer	6-11	Mississippi Gulf Coast JC
3.	Lee Scruggs	6-10	Daytona Beach (Fla.) CC
4.	Nate Knight	6-9	Utah Valley State College
5.	Julius Hicks	6-9	West Valley College (Calif.)
6.	Kevin Robinson	6-9	Butler Co. (Kan.) CC

MOVING ON

WHERE LAST YEAR'S TOP JC PLAYERS SIGNED

POINT GUARDS

Rk.	Player	Ht.	Junior college	Four-year school
1.	Steve Francis	6-3	Allegany College (Md.)	Maryland
2.	Dontay Hicks	6-1	Allen Co. (Kan.) CC	New Mexico
3.	Marlo Miles	6-1	Kennedy-King College (Ill.)	Tulane
4.	Keiron Shine	5-10	Okaloosa-Walton CC (Fla.)	Memphis
5.	Brian Samuel	6-1	Hagerstown (Md.) JC	Rutgers
6.	Michael Nurse	5-11	Monroe CC (N.Y.)	Iowa State

OFF-GUARDS

Rk.	Player	Ht.	Junior college	Four-year school
1.	Marvis Thornton*	6-4	Tallahassee (Fla.) CC	St. John's
2.	Beau Archibald	6-6	Utah Valley State College	Connecticut
3.	Kerry Hartfield	6-1	Southeastern CC (Iowa)	DePaul
4.	Eric Holmes	6-3	Dixie College (Utah)	UAB
5.	Marlon Towns	6-5	Northern Oklahoma College	Murray State
6.	Alex Scales	6-4	San Jacinto College (Texas)	Oregon

SMALL FORWARDS

Rk.	Player	Ht.	Junior college	Four-year school
1.	Shawn Marion	6-7	Vincennes (Ind.) University	UNLV
2.	Evaldas Jociys	6-9	Western Nebraska CC	East Carolina
3.	Marcus Hicks	6-6	Northwest Mississippi CC	Mississippi
4.	Michael Smith	6-8	Bossier Parish (La.) CC	NE Louisiana
5.	Kevin Houston	6-4	Seward Co. (Kan.) CC	Miami (Fla.)
6.	Gordon Scott	6-5	Barton Co. (Kan.) CC	Idaho

POWER FORWARDS

Rk.	Player	Ht.	Junior college	Four-year school
1.	Chris Porter	6-7	Chipola JC (Fla.)	Auburn
2.	Rico Harris	6-9	Los Angeles City College	Cal State-Northridge
3.	Ashante Johnson	6-8	Canada College (Calif.)	Kansas
4.	Silester Rivers	6-6	Utah Valley State College	BYU
5.	Pete Mickeal	6-6	Indian Hills CC (Iowa)	Cincinnati
6.	Desmond Walker	6-8	Florida CC-Jacksonville	Xavier

CENTERS

Rk.	Player	Ht.	Junior college	Four-year school
1.	Mate Milisa	6-10	Pensacola (Fla.) JC	Long Beach State
2.	Victor Avila	6-10	Scottsdale (Ariz.) CC	Oklahoma
3.	Brandon Kurtz	6-10	Bakersfield (Calif.) College	Tulsa
4.	Albert Richardson	6-9	McCook (Neb.) CC	St. John's
5.	K.C. Tanner	6-10	Olney (Ill.) Central College	Eastern Michigan
6.	Anthony Oates	6-10	Yavapai College (Ariz.)	Massachusetts

*—redshirted during 1997-98 season.

RATING THE TRANSFERS

Best passer under 6-5: Malcolm McCrieght, 5-8, Jackson (Tenn.) State CC, to Lamar.

Best passer over 6-5: Beau Archibald.

Best leaper: Nolan Johnson, 6-4, Kilgore (Texas) College, to Oklahoma.

Best rebounder: Chris Porter.

Best shot blocker: K.C. Tanner.

Best defender: Marcus Hicks.

Best free-throw shooter: Eugene Christopher, 6-3, Pensacola (Fla.) JC, to Troy State.

Best 3-point shooter: Eric Holmes, 6-3, Dixie College (Utah), to UAB.

Best recruiting catch: Mate Milisa.

Worst decision: Tim Cole, 6-4, Northeast Mississippi CC, to NBA draft (he was undrafted).

Biggest surprise: Steve Francis.

1998-99 NCAA DIVISION I SCHEDULES

EDITOR'S NOTE: The schedules are provided by the schools (through September 3) and may change. In addition, Georgetown, Miami (Fla.), Missouri, North Carolina A&T, Prairie View, Villanova and West Virginia did not provide information; their schedules were put together using other teams' schedules.

AIR FORCE

N13	Doane
N16	Wofford
N18	Regis
N21	Colorado
N28	Navy
D5	at Portland State
D19	Texas-Arlington
D29-30	Pepsi-Orinda Classic
J2	Dartmouth
J6	Denver
J9	at UNLV
J14	Tulsa
J16	Rice
J21	at Texas Christian
J23	at Southern Methodist
J28	Colorado State
J30	Wyoming
F6	UNLV
F11	at Rice
F13	at Tulsa
F16	at Denver
F18	Southern Methodist
F20	Texas Christian
F25	at Wyoming
F27	at Colorado State

AKRON

N20	at Illinois State
N23	Florida International
N25	at Western Kentucky
N28	at Duquesne
D2	Eastern Michigan
D5	at Buffalo
D8	Wooster
D12	at St. Joseph's
D19	at Loyola of Chicago
D21	Cleveland State
D30	at Toledo
J6	Kent
J9	Marshall
J13	at Bowling Green
J16	at Miami of Ohio
J20	Ohio University
J23	Northern Illinois
J27	at Ball State
J30	at Central Michigan
F3	Western Michigan
F10	at Eastern Michigan
F13	at Kent
F15	at Northern Illinois
F17	Bowling Green
F20	Ball State
F24	at Ohio University

ALABAMA

N15	at Ohio State
N19	Tennessee Tech
N22	Boston University
N25	McNeese State
N28	Jacksonville State
D1	at Texas A&M
D5	at Tulane
D8	Alabama State
D12	South Alabama*
D17	Northeast Louisiana
D21-23	Pearl Harbor Classic
J2	Georgia
J6	Mississippi
J9	Mississippi State
J13	at Louisiana State
J16	South Carolina
J20	at Arkansas
J23	Auburn
J27	at Florida
J30	at Tennessee
F3	at Mississippi State
F6	Kentucky
F10	Louisiana State
F13	at Auburn
F21	at Vanderbilt
F24	Mississippi
F27	at Arkansas
F27	*at Birmingham

ALABAMA A&M

N14	at West Virginia
N18	at Alabama-Huntsville
N21	Tuskegee
N23	at Mississippi
N28	South Carolina State
D5	at Arkansas State
D16	at South Alabama
D19	Grambling State
D21	Jackson State
D30	at Vanderbilt
J2	at Mississippi Valley State
J4	at Arkansas-Pine Bluff
J9	Alabama State

J16	Alcorn State
J18	Southern
J23	at Texas Southern
J25	at Prairie View A&M
J30	Mississippi Valley State
F1	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
F6	at Alabama State
F8	at Belmont
F13	at Alcorn State
F15	at Southern
F20	Texas Southern
F22	Prairie View A&M
F25	at Grambling State
F27	at Jackson State

ALABAMA STATE

N13	at Mississippi
N17	at Arkansas
N22	at DuPaul
N30	Illinois-Chicago
D5	Montevallo
D8	at Alabama
D12	Murray State
D19	Jackson State
D21	Grambling State
J2	at Arkansas-Pine Bluff
J4	at Mississippi Valley State
J9	at Alabama A&M
J12	at Auburn
J16	Southern
J18	Alcorn State
J23	at Prairie View A&M
J25	at Texas Southern
J30	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
F1	Mississippi Valley State
F6	Alabama A&M
F13	at Southern
F15	at Alcorn State
F20	Prairie View A&M
F22	Texas Southern
F25	at Jackson State
F27	at Grambling State

ALCORN STATE

N14	at UAB
N18	South Alabama
N23	Texas Southern
N25	Prairie View A&M
D2	at Illinois State
D5	at Southern Methodist
D12	Tougaloo
D19	at Oregon
D22	at Wyoming
D28	at IUPUI
J2	at Jackson State
J4	at Grambling State
J9	Mississippi Valley State
J11	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
J16	at Alabama A&M
J18	at Alabama State
J23	Southern
J30	Jackson State
F1	Grambling State
F6	at Mississippi Valley State
F8	at Arkansas-Pine Bluff
F13	Alabama A&M
F15	Alabama State
F20	at Southern
F25	at Texas Southern
F27	at Prairie View A&M

AMERICAN

N14	Delaware
N18	at Howard
N21	Catholic University
N24	Western Maryland
N30	at Boston University
D2	George Washington
D5	at East Carolina
D7	at UNC Wilmington
D9	Marist
D21	at Southern California
D23	at UCLA
D30	at Towson
J2	at Virginia Commonwealth
J9	George Mason
J13	William & Mary
J16	at Old Dominion
J20	Richmond
J23	James Madison
J27	at William & Mary
F3	Virginia Commonwealth
F6	at Richmond
F8	at James Madison
F10	Old Dominion
F13	East Carolina
F15	UNC Wilmington
F20	at George Mason

APPALACHIAN STATE

N13	at North Carolina
N17	King
N21	at Minnesota
N23	Greensboro College
N30	at East Carolina
D2	South Carolina-Spartanburg
D5	at Georgia Tech
D8	Georgia
D19	Winthrop
D29	The Citadel
J2	at Davidson
J4	Charleston (S.C.)
J9	Virginia Military
J11	at Winthrop
J14	at UT-Chattanooga
J16	East Tennessee State
J18	Western Carolina
J23	at East Tennessee State
J25	UNC Greensboro

J30	at Georgia Southern
F1	at UNC Greensboro
F3	Wisconsin-Green Bay
F8	Furman
F13	at Virginia Military
F15	at Western Carolina
F20	Davidson

ARIZONA

N13	Tennessee*
N25	Texas
N28	at Brigham Young
D5	Wyoming*
D14	UC Irvine
D19	Jowa State
D28-30	Bank One Fiesta Bowl Cl.
J2	at UCLA
J4	at Southern California
J7	Washington State
J9	Washington
J13	at Arizona State
J16	at New Mexico
J21	at Oregon
J23	at Oregon State
J28	Stanford
J30	California
F4	at Washington
F6	at Washington State
F10	Arizona State
F13	Louisiana State
F18	Oregon State
F20	Oregon
F25	at California
F27	at Stanford
M4	Southern California
M6	UCLA
F13	*Albuquerque
F15	*Phoenix
F25	*Las Vegas

ARIZONA STATE

N13	San Jose State
N17	Northern Arizona
N23-25	Maul Invitational
D1	New Orleans
D5	UNLV*
D8	Stephen F. Austin
D19	at Texas A&M
D22	Marist
D28-29	Arizona State Christmas Cl.
J4	at Southern California
J7	at UCLA
J9	Washington State
J13	Arizona
J21	at Oregon State
J23	at Oregon
J28	California
J30	Stanford
F4	at Washington State
F6	at Washington
F10	at Arizona
F18	Oregon
F20	Oregon State
F25	at Stanford
F27	at California
M4	UCLA
M6	Southern California
F13	*Phoenix

ARKANSAS

N15	Jackson State
N17	Alabama State
N20-22	Top of the World Classic
N28	Northeast Louisiana
D5	at Oklahoma
D7	Western Carolina
D16	Southeastern Louisiana
D19	Memphis
D23	at Wake Forest
D30	North Texas State
J2	at Louisiana State
J6	at Auburn
J9	Mississippi
J13	at Mississippi State
J16	Georgia
J20	Alabama
J23	Providence
J27	Louisiana State
J30	Mississippi
F2	Tennessee
F6	at Vanderbilt
F10	at South Carolina
F13	Mississippi State
F16	at Florida
F20	Kentucky
F24	Auburn
F27	at Alabama

ARKANSAS-LITTLE ROCK

N21	at Arkansas-Pine Bluff
N23	Albany
N27	Sooner Holiday Classic
D2	at Florida International
D12	at Oklahoma State
D18-19	TCBY Holiday Classic
D22	at Texas-El Paso
J22	Florida International
J4	at Texas-Pan American
J7	Southwestern Louisiana
J13	at Louisiana Tech
J16	at Arkansas State
J19	Texas-Pan American
J23	New Orleans
J25	at Southwestern Louisiana
J28	Western Kentucky
J30	Southern Alabama
F4	at New Orleans
F6	at South Alabama

F8	Denver
F10	at Western Kentucky
F13	Arkansas State
F16	Louisiana Tech
F20	at Denver

ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF

N13	at Clemson
N17	at Mississippi State
N21	Arkansas-Little Rock
N30	at Memphis
D2	at New Mexico
D4	at Oregon State
D7	Mississippi Valley State
D9	at Missouri
J2	Alabama State
J4	Alabama A&M
J9	at Southern
J11	at Alcorn State
J16	Texas Southern
J19	Prairie View A&M
J23	at Grambling State
J25	at Jackson State
J30	at Alabama State
F1	at Alabama A&M
F3	Philander Smith
F6	Southern
F8	Alcorn State
F13	at Texas Southern
F15	at Prairie View A&M
F20	Grambling State
F22	Jackson State
F24	Philander Smith
F27	at Mississippi Valley State

ARKANSAS STATE

N13	at St. Louis
N16	Baylor
N18	Oral Roberts
N23	at Texas Christian
N28	at Denver
D5	Alabama A&M
D8	Southeast Missouri State
D17	Denver
D22	at Oral Roberts
D27	at San Diego State
D29	at Southern California
J4	Florida International
J9	at Southwestern Louisiana
J14	New Orleans
J16	Arkansas-Little Rock
J21	at Western Kentucky
J23	at Florida International
J28	at Louisiana Tech
J30	Western Kentucky
F4	at South Alabama
F6	at New Orleans
F11	Southwestern Louisiana
F13	at Arkansas-Little Rock
F18	South Alabama
F20	Louisiana Tech

ARMY

N14	at Vanderbilt
N18	at Quinnipiac
N22	at Ohio State
N25	at Central Connecticut
N28	Bethany
D1	at North Carolina State
D2	at Wofford
D5	at Columbia
D7	Yale
D10	at Manhattan
D21	at Seton Hall
D30	at Marist
J2	Cornell
J5	Lehigh
J9	at Colgate
J13	at Bucknell
J16	at Lafayette
J19	Navy
J24	Holy Cross
J30	at Lehigh
F3	Colgate
F6	Bucknell
F9	Lafayette
F13	at Navy
F17	at Holy Cross

AUBURN

N13	Southeastern Louisiana
N16	Florida A&M
N19	Central Florida
N23	Central Florida
N27-28	United Airlines Tip-Off Tour
D3	UNC Asheville
D6	at Florida State
D12	UAB
D15	Wofford
D19	at Navy
D29	Bethune-Cookman
J2	Tennessee
J6	Arkansas
J9	Louisiana State
J13	Mississippi
J16	Florida
J20	at Kentucky
J23	at Alabama
J27	Mississippi State
J30	at Georgia

AUSTIN PEAY

N16	at Vanderbilt
N19	UT-Chattanooga
N23	at Missouri
N28	at Mississippi
D3	Southeast Missouri
D5	Eastern Illinois
D12	at Georgia Southern
D15	at UT-Chattanooga

D29	at South Florida
J2	Tennessee State
J7	at Morehead State
J9	at Eastern Kentucky
J12	at Southeast Missouri
J14	Tennessee Tech
J16	Middle Tennessee
J21	at UT-Martin
J23	at Murray State
J26	Belmont
J30	at Tennessee State
F2	at Eastern Illinois
F4	Morehead State
F6	Eastern Kentucky
F11	at Tennessee Tech
F13	at Middle Tennessee
F18	UT-Martin
F20	Murray State

BALL STATE

N16	at Michigan
J7	at Indiana State
J9	at UC Santa Barbara
D4-5	Cardinal Varsity Club Classic
D8	Wright State
D12	at Butler
D22	at Ohio University
D27-28	Union Federal Hoosier Cl.
J28	Northern Illinois
J7	at Central Michigan
J9	at Eastern Michigan
J13	Western Michigan
J16	at Toledo
J21	at Buffalo
J23	at Kent
J27	Akron
J30	Bowling Green
F3	at Marshall
F6	at Northern Illinois
F10	Miami of Ohio
F13	Central Michigan
F17	at Western Michigan
F20	at Akron
F24	at Buffalo

BAYLOR

N16	at Arkansas State
N21	UT-Arlington
N24	Southwest Texas State
N27-29	Honolulu Shootout
D2	at Creighton
D5	Nevada
D8	Texas Christian
D12	McNeese State
D19	at Marquette
D22	Jacksonville
D30	Texas-Pan American
J2	at Texas Tech
J6	Kansas
J9	Oklahoma State
J13	at Texas
J16	Nebraska
J20	at Oklahoma State
J23	Texas A&M
J30	at Missouri
F3	Oklahoma
F6	at Texas A&M
F10	Texas Tech
F13	at Kansas State
F17	at Iowa State
F20	Colorado
F24	Texas
F27	at Oklahoma

BELMONT

N14	at Tennessee Tech
N16	at Mississippi
N19	at Eastern Kentucky
N21	Murray State
N23	Butler
N25	at Mississippi State
N28	at Samford
N30	at Western Kentucky
D3	Navy
D7	Georgia Southern
D12	at Middle Tennessee State
D17	Campbell
D19	at Stetson
D29	at Louisiana State
J4	at Winthrop
J6	at Hofstra
J11	at Valparaiso
J18	at IUPUI
J20	at East Tennessee State
J26	at Austin Peay
J28	at Tennessee State
F1	Middle Tennessee State
F8	Alabama A&M
F11	Rust College
F16	IUPUI
F18	Risk University
F22	Valparaiso

BETHUNE-COOKMAN

N14	Siena
N17	at Detroit
N20	at Florida A&M
N24	at Florida
D5	Georgetown
D9	Stetson
D12	at Florida Atlantic
D15	at North Carolina A&T
D17	at South Carolina State

J8 Miami of Ohio
J14 at Marshall
J16 at Ohio University
J19 St. Bonaventure
J21 Ball State
J23 Central Michigan
J28 at Northern Illinois
J30 at Western Michigan
F3 Eastern Michigan
F6 Kent
F11 at Toledo
F13 at Bowling Green
F17 Marshall
F20 Northern Illinois
F24 at Ball State

BUTLER

N14 Southwest Missouri State
N19 Xavier
N21 at Indiana State
N23 at Belmont
D5 at Evansville
D8 Western Kentucky
D12 Ball State
D19 Purdue*
D23 Florida State
D26 Idaho State
J2 at Illinois-Chicago
J4 at Loyola of Chicago
J9 at Wright State
J16 Detroit
J18 Florida International
J23 at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
J25 at Wisconsin-Green Bay
J28 Illinois-Chicago
J30 Loyola of Chicago
F1 IUPUI
F6 Wright State
F11 at Detroit
F13 at Cleveland State
F18 Wisconsin-Milwaukee
F20 Wisconsin-Green Bay
Indianapolis

CALIFORNIA

N15 at Hawaii
N25 Eastern Washington
N28 at DePaul
D3 Houston
D5 Rhode Island
D7 Oregon State
D19 at Brigham Young
D21-22 Golden Bear Classic
D29 North Carolina*
J2 Oregon
J4 Oregon State
J9 at Stanford
J14 at UCLA
J16 at Southern California
J21 Washington
J23 Washington State
J28 at Arizona State
J30 at Arizona
J33 Stanford
F11 Southern California
F13 UCLA
F18 at Washington State
F20 at Washington
F25 Arizona
F27 Arizona State
M4 at Oregon State
M6 at Oregon
*Oakland.

UC IRVINE

N17 at Pepperdine
N24 Cal State Stanislaus
N28 at Oregon State
N30 at Portland
D5 Northern Arizona
D14 at Arizona
D20 James Madison
D22 Brigham Young
D28 Southern Oregon
J2 at San Diego
J7 North Texas
J9 New Mexico State
J14 at Boise State
J16 at Idaho
J21 Pacific
J23 Long Beach State
J28 at Cal Poly-SLO
J30 at UC Santa Barbara
F4 Nevada
F6 Cal State Fullerton
F11 at Utah State
F13 at Cal State Fullerton
F18 at Long Beach State
F20 at Pacific
F25 UC Santa Barbara
F27 Cal Poly-SLO

CAL POLY-SLO

N16 at Fresno State
N21 Simon Fraser
N23 Cal State Sacramento
N28 at Portland State
D5 UNLV
D12 Cal Baptist
D15 Southern
D17 Eastern Washington
D22 at Missouri-Kansas City
D29-30 All-College Tournament
J7 Boise State
J9 Idaho
J14 at Utah State
J16 at Nevada
J20 UC Santa Barbara
J23 at North Texas

J28 UC Irvine
J30 Cal State Fullerton
F4 at Pacific
F6 at Long Beach State
F11 Pacific
F13 Long Beach State
F18 New Mexico State
F20 at UC Santa Barbara
F22 at Cal State Fullerton
F27 at UC Irvine

UC SANTA BARBARA

N14 at Pepperdine
N18 San Francisco
N21 Westmont College
N24 at Portland
N28 Loyola Marymount
D5 Southern California
D17 at Santa Clara
D19 at St. Mary's
D23 Western Colorado State
D30 San Jose State
J7 Idaho
J9 Boise State
J14 at Nevada
J16 at Utah State
J20 at Cal Poly-SLO
J23 at New Mexico State
J28 Cal State Fullerton
J30 UC Irvine
F4 at Long Beach State
F6 at Pacific
F11 Long Beach State
F13 Pacific
F18 North Texas
F20 Cal Poly-SLO
F22 at UC Irvine
F27 at Cal State Fullerton

CAL STATE FULLERTON

N16 at Kansas State
N21 San Diego State
N28 Pepperdine
D2 at Loyola Marymount
D5 St. Mary's
D10 Montana State
D12 at St. Louis
D19 at Portland
D22 Quincy
D27 at San Jose State
J7 New Mexico State
J9 North Texas
J14 at Idaho
J16 at Boise State
J21 Long Beach State
J23 at Pacific
J28 at UC Santa Barbara
J30 at Cal Poly-SLO
F4 Utah State
F6 at UC Irvine
F11 at Nevada
F13 UC Irvine
F18 at Pacific
F20 at Long Beach State
F25 Cal Poly-SLO
F27 UC Santa Barbara

CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE

N14 at Long Beach State
N17 at Tennessee
N22 at San Jose State
N28 San Diego
N30 Southern California College
D3-4 Power Bar Invitational
D11-12 Cougar Classic
D19 at UCLA
D22 James Madison
D29 Lewis & Clark
J2 at Northern Arizona
J4 Idaho State
J7 Portland State
J9 Eastern Washington
J14 at Montana State
J16 at Montana
J20 Cal State Sacramento
J21 Weber State
J28 at Idaho State
F6 Northern Arizona
F11 Montana
F13 Montana State
F18 Eastern Washington
F20 Portland State
F25 Weber State
F27 Cal State Sacramento

CAL STATE SACRAMENTO

N19 Lamar
N21 St. Mary's
N23 at Cal Poly-SLO
N28 Pacific
D1 at Fresno State
D5 Houston
D9 San Jose State
D12 at New Mexico
D22 at Northern Illinois
D28 at Minnesota
D30 Weber State
J4 at Northern Arizona
J14 at Eastern Washington
J17 at Portland State
J20 at Cal State Northridge
J23 Idaho State
J25 Montana State
J28 Montana
F4 at Montana State
F6 at Weber State
F11 Portland State
F13 Eastern Washington
F18 at Montana

F20 at Idaho State
F25 Northern Arizona
F27 Cal State Northridge

CAMPBELL

N14 at Richmond
N18 at North Carolina State
N21 East Carolina
N24 Coastal Carolina
N28 Mars Hill
D2 at UNC Wilmington
D17 at Winthrop
D19 at Vanderbilt
D22 UNC Asheville
J2 at Central Florida
J4 at Florida Atlantic
J7 Central Florida
J9 Florida Atlantic
J14 at Georgia State
J16 at Mercer
J21 Samford
J23 Jacksonville State
J28 Stetson
J30 Jacksonville
F4 at Troy State
F6 at Centenary
F11 at Samford
F13 at Jacksonville State
F18 Georgia State
F20 Troy State

CANISUS

N21 at St. Bonaventure
N24 at Buffalo
D4 Iona
D6 St. Peter's
D12 Buffalo
D19 at Xavier
D22 Duquesne
D28-29 Bobcat Holiday Classic
J3 Colgate
J8 at Marist
J10 at Siena
J14 at Fairfield
J16 Marist
J18 Loyola (Md.)
J21 Rider
J23 Manhattan
F30 at Iona
F31 at St. Peter's
F4 Siena
F6 Niagara
F8 at Manhattan
F11 Fairfield
F15 at Niagara
F18 at Loyola (Md.)
F20 at Rider

CENTENARY

N21 at Texas A&M
N29 at Creighton
D2 at Southeastern Louisiana
D5 Northwestern State
D6 at Mississippi State
D18-19 TCSB Holiday Classic
J30 at Missouri
J2 at Jacksonville
J4 at Stetson
J9 Jacksonville
J11 Stetson
J16 Samford
J18 at Jacksonville State
J23 Central Florida
J25 Florida Atlantic
J28 at Troy State
J30 at Mercer
F6 Campbell
F8 Georgia State
F13 at Florida Atlantic
F15 at Central Florida
F18 Jacksonville State
F20 at Samford

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE

N20-21 Mohegan Sun Tournament
N25 Army
D3-4 Phoenix Classic
D7 at Fairfield Dickinson
D10 Mount St. Mary's
D12 UM-Baltimore County
D22 at Northeastern
D28-29 Hawaii-Hilo Tournament
J2 at Quinnipiac
J4 at Wagner
J7 St. Francis (Pa.)
J9 St. Francis (N.Y.)
J16 at Long Island
J18 at St. Francis (N.Y.)
F2 at Monmouth
F4 Wagner
F6 Monmouth
F11 at UM-Baltimore County
F13 at Mount St. Mary's
F15 Fairfield Dickinson
F18 at Robert Morris
F20 Quinnipiac

CENTRAL FLORIDA

N13 Rollins College
N19 at Auburn
N27-28 Coca-Cola Spartan Classic
J2 at Winthrop
D11 at Miami
D15 at McNeese State
D17 at South Florida
D20 Barry
D28 Ohio University
J2 Campbell

J4 Georgia State
J7 at Campbell
J9 at Georgia State
J14 Jacksonville
J16 Stetson
J20 at Florida Atlantic
J23 at Centenary
J28 at Samford
J30 at Jacksonville State
F4 Mercer
F6 Troy State
F9 at Stetson
F15 Centenary
F18 at Jacksonville
F20 Florida Atlantic

CENTRAL MICHIGAN

N14 Rochester College
N17 at Wright State
N21 at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
N24 at South Florida
N30 Robert Morris
D2 Fairfield
D5 at Notre Dame
D9 at Detroit
D12 Miami of Ohio
D13 UNC Greensboro
D30 Buffalo
J2 at Marshall
J7 at Ohio University
J12 Ball State
J13 at Northern Illinois
J16 Western Michigan
J20 at Eastern Michigan
J23 at Buffalo
J27 Toledo
J30 Akron
F3 at Kent
F6 University
F10 at Bowling Green
F13 at Ball State
F18 Northern Illinois
F20 at Toledo
F24 Eastern Michigan

CHARLESTON SOUTHERN

N13 College of Charleston
N16 at Georgia Tech
N21 St. Peter's
N25 at Stetson
D2 at North Carolina State
D7 at Furman
D5 at Florida
D5 South Carolina State
D18 Erskine (S.C.)
D21-22 Coll. of Charleston Classic
J9 at Wake Forest
J11 at High Point
J16 at Radford
J18 at Liberty
J23 Winthrop
J25 UNC Asheville
J30 at Coastal Carolina
F1 High Point
F6 Liberty
F8 Radford
F11 at UNC Asheville
F13 at Winthrop
F17 at Elon
F20 Coastal Carolina

CHICAGO STATE

N14 at Northern Illinois
N17 Loyola of Chicago
N21 at Xavier
N23 at Iowa State
N28 Western Illinois
D2 at DePaul
D17 at Oregon State
D19 at Gonzaga
D22-23 Coors Light Classic
D28 at Wright State
J2 at Missouri-Kansas City
J4 at Oral Roberts
J7 IUPUI
J9 Oakland University
J14 at IUPUI
J16 Southern Utah
J21 Valparaiso
J23 at Western Illinois
J28 Oral Roberts
J30 Missouri-Kansas City
F4 at Youngstown State
F11 Youngstown State
F13 at Oakland University
F18 at Valparaiso
F20 at Southern Utah

CINCINNATI

N19 at Rhode Island
N23-28 Great Alaska Shootout
D5 Oakland University
D12 Southwest Louisiana
D14 Nicholls State
D16 at Minnesota
D19 at UNLV
D22 Houston
D27 UNC Wilmington
D30 Marquette
J6 DePaul
J9 at Southern Mississippi
J14 at UNC Charlotte
J16 Oklahoma
J21 at Louisville
J23 St. Louis
J30 Xavier
J38 UAB

F3 Tulane
F6 at DePaul
F10 at Marquette
F14 at St. Louis
F17 UNC Charlotte
F21 Louisville
F25 at South Florida
F27 at Memphis
*Cleveland

THE CITADEL

N17 Anderson
N20 Georgia Tech
N23 Toccoa Falls
D8 at South Carolina
D28 William & Mary
D5 at Stetson
D8 Winthrop
D12 Lynchburg
D19 University of the South
D21 at Coastal Carolina
D29 at Appalachian State
J4 at Furman
J9 at College of Charleston
J11 Georgia Southern
J13 UNC Greensboro
J16 UT-Chattanooga
J18 at Davidson
J23 Furman
J25 at East Tennessee State
J30 at Wofford
F1 VMI
F6 College of Charleston
F9 at UT-Chattanooga
F13 Western Carolina
F15 at Georgia Southern
F20 Wofford

CLEMSON

N13 Arkansas-Pine Bluff
N16 Stetson
N19 Western Carolina
N23-25 Maui Invitational
N30 Radford
D3 East Tennessee State
D12 UNC Asheville
D16 at South Carolina
D21 South Carolina State
D26 Furman*
D29 Illinois
J2 at North Carolina
J5 North Carolina State
J10 Wake Forest
J12 at Florida State
J17 at Virginia
J20 Duke
J24 Maryland
J28 at Georgia Tech
F4 North Carolina
F6 at North Carolina State
F10 at Wake Forest
F14 Florida State
F17 Virginia
F20 at Duke
F24 at Maryland
F28 Georgia Tech
*Greenville, S.C.

CLEVELAND STATE

N14 Stony Brook
N24 at UAB
D5 Jacksonville
D8 at Brown
D12 Ohio University
D19 Kent
D21 Prairie View A&M
D29 at Akron
D30 Sacred Heart
D32 Rhode Island*
D39 at Tulsa
J2 at Wisconsin-Green Bay
J4 at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
J7 Loyola of Chicago
J14 Illinois-Chicago
J16 at Butler
J21 at Wright State
J23 Bethune-Cookman
J28 Detroit
J30 Wisconsin-Milwaukee
F4 at Illinois-Chicago
F6 at Loyola of Chicago
F11 Wright State
F13 Butler
F20 at Detroit
*Cleveland

COASTAL CAROLINA

N14 St. Andrews (N.C.)
N21 at North Carolina State
N24 at Campbell
N28 at Mercer
D30 at Florida
D32 Newberry
D39 at Virginia Tech
D12 St. Joseph (Vt.)
D16 at Wake Forest
D21 The Citadel
J6 at UNC Greensboro
J9 Elon
J13 High Point
J16 at Liberty
J18 at Radford
J23 at UNC Asheville
J27 Winthrop
J30 Charleston Southern
F1 at Elon
F3 College of Charleston
F6 Radford

Liberty
F11 at Winthrop
F13 UNC Asheville
F17 at High Point
F20 at Charleston Southern

COLGATE

N17 at Syracuse
N21 at Dartmouth
N24 Hofstra
N27-28 Pepsi-Marist Classic
D1 Delaware
D4-5 Ameritas Classic
D8 Siena
D11 Harvard
D20 Cornell
D30 Manhattan
J3 at Canisius
J6 at Holy Cross
J13 at Lehigh
J16 at Pennsylvania
J20 Bucknell
J23 at Lafayette
J27 at Navy
J30 Holy Cross
F3 at Army
F7 Lehigh
F13 at Bucknell
F17 Lafayette
F20 Navy

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

N13 at Charleston Southern
N16 at Georgia*
N23 Pfeiffer
D1 Massachusetts
D4 South Carolina*
D5 North Carolina*
D12 George Mason
D17 Francis Marion
D21-22 College of Charleston
D28 Western Carolina
J2 at Georgia Southern
J4 at Appalachian State
J9 The Citadel
J11 at Furman
J16 Wofford
J18 Chattanooga
J23 UNC Greensboro
J25 at Wofford
F10 at Davidson
F1 Georgia Southern
F3 at Coastal Carolina
F6 at The Citadel
F13 VMI
F15 at Chattanooga
F20 at East Tennessee State
F24 Furman
*Chase NIT
*Charlotte, N.C.

COLORADO

N14 Denver
N17 Colorado State
N20 Elon
D21 Stephen F. Austin
D26-29 Puerto Rico Shootout
D32 Virginia Commonwealth
J31 at North Carolina A&T
J4 at South Carolina State
J11 Bethune-Cookman
J16 at Delaware State
J18 at Mid-Eastern Shore
J23 at Hampton
J25 Norfolk State
F1 at Howard
F6 South Carolina State
F8 North Carolina A&T
F13 at Bethune-Cookman
F15 at Florida A&M
F20 Delaware State
F22 Md.-Eastern Shore
F27 at Morgan State

CORNELL

N17 Buffalo
N21 Bucknell
N24 Penn State-Berndt
N27-28 Lobo Classic
D4-5 First Bank Classic
D12 Marist
D20 at Colgate
D30 at Lehigh
J2 at Army
J8 Harvard
J9 Dartmouth
J16 Columbia
J18 Lafayette
J23 at Columbia
J30 Pennsylvania
J33 at Yale
F6 at Brown
F12 at Dartmouth
F13 at Harvard
F19 Brown
F20 Yale
F26 at Princeton
F27 at Pennsylvania

CREIGHTON

N14 Towson
N18 at Missouri-Kansas City
N25 at Iowa
N29 Centenary
D2 Baylor
D5 Southern Illinois
D9 at Nebraska

COLUMBIA
N15 at Holy Cross
N18 at Lafayette
N21 Quinnipiac
N23 at St. John's
N27-28 Pepsi-Marist Classic
D3 at Rutgers
D5 Army
D7 Stony Brook
D27 Nevada-Las Vegas
J2 at Lehigh
J8 Dartmouth
J9 Harvard
J16 at Cornell
J24 Cornell
J29 Princeton
J20 Pennsylvania
F5 at Brown
F6 at Yale
F12 at Harvard
F13 at Dartmouth
F19 Yale
F20 Brown
F26 at Pennsylvania
F27 at Princeton

CONNECTICUT

N15 Quinnipiac
N19 Richmond
N24 Hartford
D27 Wagner
N1 Washington*
D5 Michigan State
D9 at Massachusetts
D12 at Pittsburgh
D23 Fairfield
D30 Villanova
J2 Georgetown
J6 at Boston College
J9 at West Virginia
J12 Notre Dame
J16 Pittsburgh
J20 at Miami
J23 Seton Hall
J25 at Georgetown
J30 at St. John's
F1 Syracuse
F6 at Stanford
F10 Boston College
F13 at Seton Hall
F16 Rutgers
F20 Miami
F28 at Providence
F28 at Syracuse
*Chicago

COPPIN STATE

N13 at Fresno State
N15 at Oregon
N19 at Syracuse
N21 at Oklahoma
D3-4 Power Bar Invitational
D7 at California
D12 Morgan State
D14 Howard
D21 at Kansas State
D23 at New Mexico
D31 at North Carolina A&T
J4 at South Carolina State
J11 Bethune-Cookman
J16 at Delaware State
J18 at Mid-Eastern Shore
J23 at Hampton
J25 Norfolk State
F1 at Howard
F6 South Carolina State
F8 North Carolina A&T
F13 at Bethune-Cookman
F15 at Florida A&M
F20 Delaware State
F22 Md.-Eastern Shore
F27 at Morgan State

CORNELL

N17 Buffalo
N21 Bucknell
N24 Penn State-Berndt
N27-28 Lobo Classic
D4-5 First Bank Classic
D12 Marist
D20 at Colgate
D30 at Lehigh
J2 at Army
J8 Harvard
J9 Dartmouth
J16 Columbia
J18 Lafayette
J23 at Columbia
J30 Pennsylvania
J33 at Yale
F6 at Brown
F12 at Dartmouth
F13 at Harvard
F19 Brown
F20 Yale
F26 at Princeton
F27 at Pennsylvania

CREIGHTON

N14 Towson
N18 at Missouri-Kansas City
N25 at Iowa
N29 Centenary
D2 Baylor
D5 Southern Illinois
D9 at Nebraska

D12	at Drake
D20	Oklahoma State
D22	Mississippi Valley State
D30	Bradley
J2	at Indiana State
J4	Evansville
J10	at Southwest Missouri State
J17	Indiana State
J20	at Evansville
J23	Illinois State
J27	at Bradley
J30	at Northern Iowa
F1	at Southern Illinois
F6	at Wichita State
F10	Northern Iowa
F14	at Illinois State
F17	Southwest Missouri State
F20	Drake
F22	Wichita State

DARTMOUTH

N14	Lafayette
N18	at Vermont
N21	Colgate
N28	Keene State
D1	at Holy Cross
D13	New Hampshire
D16	at Harvard
D19	Northern Carolina
D21	at Navy
D28	at Denver
D31	at Wyoming
J8	at Air Force
J8	at Columbia
J9	at Cornell
J13	Harvard
J23	Denver
J30	Brown
J31	Yale
F5	at Pennsylvania
F6	at Princeton
F12	Cornell
F13	Columbia
F19	Princeton
F20	Pennsylvania
F26	at Yale
F27	at Brown

DAVIDSON

N17	at Duke
N23	at Navy
N27	at Wake Forest
N30	Ebon
D4-5	Ameritas Classic
D8	UNC Charlotte
D12	Bowdoin
D19	Washington College
D29	at Massachusetts
J4	Appalachian State
J9	at VMI
J11	at East Tennessee State
J16	at UNC Greensboro
J18	Western Carolina
J23	The Citadel
J25	at UT Chattanooga
J25	VMI
J30	College of Charleston
F1	at Western Carolina
F3	Furman
F6	UNC Greensboro
F8	at Georgia Southern
F13	Eastern Tennessee State
F16	at Wofford
F20	at Appalachian State

DAYTON

N14	Kent
N18	JUPUI
N22	at Miami
N28	Marquette
D5	at Northwestern
D12	Toledo
D19	Eastern Michigan
D21	Louisville
D27	Cincinnati
D30	DePaul
J2	Fordham
J6	St. Joseph's
J10	at Rhode Island
J14	at George Washington
J16	at La Salle
J21	Virginia Tech
J23	at Duquesne
J28	Massachusetts
J30	Xavier
F4	at Temple
F6	at St. Bonaventure
F14	George Washington
F17	Duquesne
F20	at Virginia Tech
F24	at Xavier
F27	La Salle
F27	Cleveland

DELAWARE

N14	at American
N18	Delaware State
N23	Rider
N25	at Howard
D1	at Colgate
D5	at Drexel
D21-22	Coll. of Charleston Classic
D28	at Virginia
J2	Northeastern
J4	Boston University
J10	Towson
J14	at Vermont
J16	at Hartford
J19	at Hofstra

J22	Maine
J24	New Hampshire
J27	Drexel
J30	at Northeastern
F1	at Boston University
F6	at Towson
F10	Hofstra
F13	Vermont
F15	Hartford
F18	at Maine
F20	at New Hampshire

DELAWARE STATE

N18	at Delaware
N20-21	Mohegan Sun Tournament
N24	at Drake
D1	at UCLA
D7	at Hampton
D10	at Md.-Eastern Shore
D14	at Norfolk State
J2	Bethune-Cookman
J4	Florida A&M
J9	at Stony Brook
J11	at Howard
J16	Coppin State
J18	Morgan State
J23	at North Carolina A&T
J25	at South Carolina State
J30	Hampton
F1	Norfolk State
F3	Lehigh
F6	at Bethune-Cookman
F8	at Florida A&M
F15	Howard
F20	at Georgia Tech
F22	at Morgan State
F27	Md.-Eastern Shore

DEPAUL

N13	New Mexico*
N22	at Alabama State
N24	UNC Wilmington
N28	California
D1	Chicago State
D6-7	BB-T Classic
D12	Texas-Pan American
D17	at Kansas
D19	at Louisville
D30	at Dayton
J2	Houston
J6	at Cincinnati
J9	Marquette
J14	UAB
J17	Louisville
J24	at Marquette
J28	at South Florida
J30	at Tulane
F3	UNC Charlotte
F6	Cincinnati
F11	St. Louis
F13	Memphis
F18	at Southern Mississippi
F20	at St. Louis
F24	Duke
F27	at UNC Charlotte
F27	*Albuquerque, N.M.

DETROIT

N17	Bethune-Cookman
N19	at Michigan
N24	at Bowling Green
N28	Texas Southern
D1	at Western Michigan
D4-5	Super Chevy Shootout
D9	Central Michigan
D22-29	Sierra Providence Sun Cl.
J2	at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
J4	at Wisconsin-Green Bay
J7	Loyola of Chicago
J9	Illinois-Chicago
J14	at Wright State
J16	at Butler
J23	at Cleveland State
J28	Wisconsin-Milwaukee
J30	Wisconsin-Green Bay
F4	at Loyola of Chicago
F6	at Illinois-Chicago
F11	American
F13	Wright State
F20	Cleveland State

DRAKE

N24	Delaware State
N28	Lamar
D1	Jowa
D5	Loyola of Chicago
D8	at Iowa State
D12	Creighton
D19	Hoosier Classic
D27-28	at Evansville
J4	at Wichita State
J9	Bradley
J13	at Illinois State
J16	at Southwest Missouri State
J18	at Southern Illinois
J24	Northern Iowa
J27	Southwest Missouri State
J30	at Evansville
F4	Indiana State
F11	Wichita State
F13	at Indiana State
F17	Southern Illinois
F20	at Creighton
F22	at Northern Iowa
N24	Monmouth
N28	Richmond
N30	Delaware
D5	

DREXEL

D19	La Salle*
D29-30	Pepsi-Oneida Classic
J2	at Maine
J4	at New Hampshire
J8	at Vermont
J10	at Hartford
J14	Northeastern
J16	Boston University
J19	at Towson
J24	Hofstra
J27	at Delaware
J30	Maine
F1	New Hampshire
F5	Vermont
F7	Hartford
F10	Towson
F13	at Northeastern
F15	at Boston University
F20	at Hofstra

DUKE

N14	Fairfield
N17	at Davidson
N21	South Carolina State
N23-28	Great Alaska Shootout
D5	North Carolina State
D9	Florida
D12	Michigan
D20	North Carolina A&T
D22	Kentucky
D30	UNC Greensboro
J3	at Maryland
J6	Georgia Tech
J10	at Virginia
J13	at Wake Forest
J16	Florida State
J20	at Clemson
J24	at St. John's
J27	North Carolina
J30	at North Carolina State
F3	Maryland
F6	at Georgia Tech
F11	at Virginia
F13	Wake Forest
F17	at Florida State
F20	Clemson
F24	at DePaul
F27	at North Carolina
F27	*Chicago
F27	*East Rutherford, N.J.

DUQUESNE

N14	Albany
N18	West Virginia
N21	Buffalo
N23	at Maryland
N28	Akron
D2	South Florida
D5	at Radford
D7	at James Madison
D12	Conference Challenge
D22	at Canisius
J2	George Washington
J6	at La Salle
J9	Xavier
J13	at Massachusetts
J19	Temple
J23	Dayton
J25	Pittsburgh
J28	at George Washington
J30	Rhode Island
F3	Virginia Tech
F7	at Fordham
F9	at Xavier
F14	St. Bonaventure
F17	at Dayton
F20	La Salle
F25	at St. Joseph's
F27	at Virginia Tech

EAST CAROLINA

N14	at Jacksonville State
N21	at Campbell
N24	Southwestern Louisiana
N28	at Liberty
N30	Appalachian State
D5	American
D8	at Wisconsin-Green Bay
D12	Evansville
D19	at South Carolina
D22	at Georgia
D28	Francis Marion
J6	Virginia Commonwealth
J9	at James Madison
J13	at William & Mary
J16	George Mason
J23	at UNC Wilmington
J30	William & Mary
F1	at Old Dominion
F3	James Madison
F10	at Virginia Commonwealth
F13	at American
F15	at George Mason
F17	Richmond
F20	UNC Wilmington

EASTERN ILLINOIS

N16	Missouri Baptist
N18	Indiana State
N21	at Loyola of Chicago
N29	at Purdue
D3	at Tennessee State
D5	at Austin Peay
D8	Evansville
D10	Western Illinois
D12	at Illinois

D18-19	Nike Festival
D29	Illinois State
J2	Morehead State
J4	Eastern Kentucky
J7	at Tennessee Tech
J9	at Middle Tennessee
J12	Tennessee State
J14	UT-Martin
J16	Murray State
J23	Southwest Missouri
J28	at Morehead State
J30	at Eastern Kentucky
F2	Austin Peay
F4	Tennessee Tech
F6	Middle Tennessee
F11	at UT-Martin
F13	at Murray State
F20	at Southeast Missouri

EASTERN KENTUCKY

N17	at Kentucky
N19	Belmont
N24	at Indiana State
D3	UT-Martin
D5	Murray State
D12	at IUPUI
D19	at Notre Dame
D21-22	Golden Bear Classic
D30	Georgia State
J2	at Southeast Missouri
J4	at Eastern Illinois
J7	Tennessee State
J9	Austin Peay
J12	at UT-Martin
J16	Morehead State
J21	Tennessee Tech
J23	at Middle Tennessee
J28	Southwest Missouri
J30	Eastern Illinois
F2	at Murray State
F4	at Tennessee State
F6	at Austin Peay
F13	at Morehead State
F18	Tennessee Tech
F20	Middle Tennessee

EASTERN MICHIGAN

N25	Boise State
N28	at Colorado State
D2	at Akron
D9	Bowling Green
D5	Michigan
D12	at Minnesota
D19	at Dayton
D21	at Kent
D29-30	Sparklets Invitational
J2	at Marshall
J6	Miami of Ohio
J9	Ball State
J13	at Ohio University
J16	at Northern Illinois
J20	at Central Michigan
J27	at Western Michigan
J30	Toledo
F3	at Buffalo
F6	Marshall
F10	Akron
F13	at Miami of Ohio
F17	Ohio University
F20	Western Michigan
F24	at Central Michigan

EASTERN WASHINGTON

N21	San Diego
N24	at California
N30	Gonzaga
D5	Washington State
D11-12	Bolemlaker Invitational
D17	at Cal Poly-SLO
D19	at San Jose State
D22	Evergreen State
J2	Idaho State
J7	at Northern Arizona
J9	at Cal State Northridge
J14	Cal State Sacramento
J16	Weber State
J21	Montana State
J23	Montana
J27	at Weber State
J30	at Portland State
F4	Portland State
F11	at Idaho State
F13	at Cal State Sacramento
F18	at Cal State Northridge
F20	Northern Arizona
F25	at Montana State
F28	at Montana

EAST TENNESSEE STATE

N14	Anderson
N16	at Middle Tennessee State
N19	at Virginia Tech
N28	Middle Tennessee State
D3	Clemson
D7	UNC Asheville
D10	Michigan State
D19	at Wake Forest
D22	Ferrum
J2	VMI
J5	Western Carolina
J9	Davidson
J11	at UT-Chattanooga
J16	at Appalachian State
J18	at UNC Greensboro
J20	Belmont
J23	Appalachian State
J25	The Citadel
J30	at Western Carolina
F1	Furman

F4	at Wofford
F6	at VMI
F8	UNC Greensboro
F13	at Davidson
F15	Charleston
F20	at Georgia Southern

ELON

N14	at Virginia Military
N16	at Old Dominion
N23	at Colorado
N20	at North Carolina A&T
N28	at Virginia
N30	at Davidson
D2	Virginia Military
D4	at Mt. Aloysius
D21-22	Stanford Invitational
D29	at Northern Arizona
J4	Belmont Abbey
J6	at Coastal Carolina
J11	at Charleston Southern
J16	UNC Asheville
J20	Winthrop
J23	at Radford
J25	Lenoir-Rhyne
J27	Liberty
J30	High Point
F1	Coastal Carolina
F4	at Winthrop
F6	at UNC Asheville
F11	at Liberty
F13	Radford
F17	Charleston Southern
F20	at High Point

EVANSVILLE

N14	Western Kentucky
N18	at UT-Martin
N22	Sacred Heart
N27-29	Big Island Invitational
D5	Butler
D6	at Eastern Illinois
D12	at East Carolina
D16	Tennessee Tech
D19	Indiana State
D29	at Morehead State
J2	at Creighton
J9	Northern Iowa
J9	Wichita State
J13	at Northern Iowa
J16	Illinois State
J20	Creighton
J23	at Bradley
J27	Southern Illinois
J30	Drake
F4	at Wichita State
F6	at Southwest Missouri State
F10	at Nova Southeastern
F13	at Southern Illinois
F17	Bradley
F20	at Illinois State
F22	Southwest Missouri State

FAIRFIELD

N14	at Duke
N17	at Fordham
N20-21	Fairfield Tournament
N28	at Boston College
D2	at Central Michigan
D5	at Loyola (Md.)
D7	Rider
D12	San Francisco
D23	at Connecticut
J25	at Marist
J30	Niagara
F1	at St. Peter's
F6	Siena
F8	Canisius
F10	Manhattan
F13	at Iona
F23	Loyola (Md.)
F26	at Manhattan
J28	St. Peter's
F1	at Siena
F6	at Rider
F11	at Canisius
F13	at Niagara
F18	Jona
F20	Marist

FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON

FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON	
N21	Maine
N28	Manhattan
D5	at Rutgers
D7	Central Connecticut State
D12	Conference Challenge
D16	Youngstown State
D22	at St. John's
D30	Quinnipiac
J2	at St. Francis (Pa.)
J4	at Robert Morris
J7	Long Island
J11	at Monmouth
J16	Wagner
J18	Md.-Baltimore Co.
J21	St. Francis (Pa.)
J23	Mount St. Mary's
J28	at Md.-Baltimore Co.
J30	at Mount St. Mary's
F1	Robert Morris
F4	at Long Island
F6	St. Francis (N.Y.)
F11	Monmouth
F13	at Quinnipiac
F15	Central Connecticut State
F20	at Wagner

SCHEDULES

D2	at Mississippi State
D4-5	Tom Robinson Tournament
D6	at UAB
D17	at Morehead State
J2	Mercer
J4	at Troy State
J7	at Mercer
J9	Troy State
J14	at Samford
J18	Centenary
J23	at Campbell
J25	Georgia State
J30	Florida Atlantic
F1	Central Florida
F4	at Stetson
F6	at Jacksonville
F10	at Georgia State
F12	Campbell
F15	Samford
F18	at Centenary

JAMES MADISON

N14	Morgan State
N18	at North Carolina A&T
N22	Rutgers
N28	Md.-Eastern Shore
D2	Liberty
D5	George Mason
D7	Duquesne
D12	at Radford
D20	at UNC Irvine
D22	at Cal State Northridge
D30	at St. Peter's
D32	at UNC Wilmington
J6	at Old Dominion
J9	East Carolina
J11	at Richmond
J16	Virginia Commonwealth
J20	William & Mary
J23	at American
J27	Old Dominion
J30	at George Mason
F3	at East Carolina
F6	UNC Wilmington
F8	American
F10	Richmond
F17	at William & Mary
F20	at Virginia Commonwealth

KANSAS

N13	Gonzaga
N16	at Pennsylvania
N21	Fort Hays State
N27	UNLV
D1	Kentucky
D5	Pepperdine
D8	Iowa
D12	Southern California
D17	DePaul
D19	Illinois
D23	at St. Louis
J2	Texas A&M
J6	at Baylor
J9	Iowa State
J11	at Missouri
J18	at Massachusetts
J24	Missouri
J27	at Nebraska
J30	Colorado
F1	at Kansas State
F7	at Colorado
F10	Nebraska
F17	at Texas Tech
F20	Kansas State
F22	at Oklahoma
F28	Oklahoma State
F28	at Iowa State
*Springfield, Mass.	
†Chicago	
‡Los Angeles	
§Kansas City, Mo.	

KANSAS STATE

N13	St. Mary's (Calif.)
N16	Cal State Fullerton
N23-25	Mau Invitational
D6	Wichita State
D12	at Long Beach State
D19	Missouri-Kansas City
D21	Coppin State
D28	at St. Louis
J2	at Oklahoma State
J6	Missouri
J9	Texas Tech
J13	at Nebraska
J16	at Texas
J20	Colorado
J23	Oklahoma
J27	at Missouri
F1	Kansas
F6	at Iowa State
F10	at Texas A&M
F13	Baylor
F17	at Kansas
F20	Iowa State
F24	Nebraska
F27	at Colorado

KENT

N14	at Dayton
N18	Youngstown State
N26	at Loyola (Md.)
D2	at UNC Charlotte
D5	St. Bonaventure
D12	at Cleveland State
D19	at Toledo
D21	Eastern Michigan
J2	Buffalo

J6	at Akron
J9	Bowling Green
J16	at Marshall
J20	Miami of Ohio
J23	Ball State
J27	Ohio University
J30	at Northern Illinois
F3	Central Michigan
F6	at Buffalo
F10	at Western Michigan
F13	Akron
F20	at Ohio University
F24	at Miami of Ohio

KENTUCKY

N17	Eastern Kentucky
N19	Mercer
N23	Wright State
N26-28	Puerto Rico Shootout
D1	Kansas
D5	Miami
D8	Indiana
D12	Maryland
D19	Georgia Tech
D22	Duke
D26	at Louisville
D29	Tennessee State
J2	Florida
J5	at South Carolina
J9	at Vanderbilt
J12	Tennessee
J16	at Mississippi
J20	Auburn
J23	Mississippi State
J26	at Georgia
J30	Louisiana State
F4	at Florida
F6	at Alabama
F13	South Carolina
F17	Georgia
F20	at Arkansas
F24	Vanderbilt
F28	at Tennessee
*Cincinnati	
†Louisville	
‡Atlanta	
§East Rutherford, N.J.	

LAFAYETTE

N14	at Dartmouth
N18	Princeton
N22	at Rutgers
N27	at Purdue
D1	at St. Peter's
D2	Swarthmore
D5	at Howard
D10	Columbia
D12	Pepsi Challenge
D28-29	Gossner Foods Classic
J2	Pennsylvania
J9	at Navy
J13	Holy Cross
J16	Army
J18	at Cornell
J20	at Lehigh
J23	Colgate
J25	Haverford
J27	at Bucknell
F3	Navy
F6	at Holy Cross
F10	at Army
F14	Lehigh
F17	at Colgate
F21	Bucknell

LAMAR

N19	at Sacramento State
N24	Texas A&M-Kingsville
N28	at Drake
D6	Loyola (La.)
D6	at Texas A&M
D12	at Tulane
D16	Southwestern Louisiana
D19	Northern Illinois
D28	at Nichols State
D30	at Southeastern Louisiana
J2	at Texas-San Antonio
J4	Southwest Texas State
J7	at Northeast Louisiana
J9	at Northwestern State
J16	Sam Houston State
J21	Stephen F. Austin
J23	at McNeese State
J28	Southeastern Louisiana
F4	at Stephen F. Austin
F6	at Texas-Arlington
F11	at Sam Houston State
F13	Texas-Arlington
F18	Nicholls State
F20	at Texas-San Antonio
F25	McNeese State
F27	Northwestern State

LA SALLE

N14	at Mount St. Mary's
N21	Howard
N27-28	Lobo Classic
D5	at Seton Hall
D11-12	Boilermaker Invitational
D19	Drexel
D23	Niagara
D28	at Temple
J6	Duquesne
J9	at George Washington
J12	Virginia Tech
J16	Pennsylvania
J16	Dayton

J21	at Rhode Island
J23	St. Joseph's
J28	at St. Bonaventure
J31	at Virginia Tech
F3	George Washington
F6	Xavier
F10	Fordham
F16	at Xavier
F20	at Duquesne
F23	Massachusetts
F27	at Dayton

LEHIGH

N7	Converse
N13	Vermont
N16	St. Francis
N19	at Yale
N23	at Penn State
N28	at Harvard
D2	at Pennsylvania
D7	Drew
D19	Hobart
D21	Wagner
D27	at Rutgers
D30	Cornell
J2	Columbia
J5	at Army
J9	Manhattan
J13	Colgate
J16	at Bucknell
J20	Lafayette
J23	Navy
J27	Holy Cross
J30	Army
F3	at Delaware State
F7	at Colgate
F10	Bucknell
F17	at Navy
F20	Holy Cross

LIBERTY

N14	East Stroudsburg (Pa.)
N17	at St. Bonaventure
N21	Iona
N24	Virginia Tech
N28	East Carolina
D2	at James Madison
D8	at Virginia
D12	at Virginia Commonwealth
D16	at Southern Methodist
D19	Augusta State
J2	Covenant
J7	Tusculum
J9	UNC Asheville
J12	Winthrop
J16	Coastal Carolina
J18	Charleston Southern
J23	at High Point
J27	at Elon
J30	Radford
F1	at Winthrop
F6	at Charleston Southern
F8	at Coastal Carolina
F11	Elon
F13	High Point
F17	at UNC Asheville
F20	at Radford

LONG BEACH STATE

N14	Cal State Northridge
N17	at Loyola Marymount
N21	Pepperdine
N24	at Southern California
N28	at San Diego State
D1	Cal State Dominguez Hills
D5	Utah
D9	at Southwest Missouri State
D12	Kansas State
D27	at Northwestern
J2	at Idaho
J7	Nevada
J9	Utah State
J14	at New Mexico State
J16	at North Texas
J21	at Cal State Fullerton
J23	at UC Irvine
J28	Boise State
J30	at Pacific
F4	UC Santa Barbara
F6	at Cal Poly-SLO
F11	at UC Santa Barbara
F13	at Cal Poly-SLO
F18	UC Irvine
F20	Cal State Fullerton
F27	Pacific

LONG ISLAND

N20-21	Fairfield Tournament
N30	Niagara
D5	Wagner
D7	Robert Morris
D10	at St. Francis (N.Y.)
D12	at Robert Morris
D20	at Florida
D22	at South Florida
D28	at Georgia
J2	Mount St. Mary's
J4	Md.-Baltimore County
J7	at Fairfield Dickinson
J11	at Monmouth
J16	St. Francis (N.Y.)
J21	Central Connecticut State
J23	at Quinnipiac
J28	at Central Connecticut State
F4	Monmouth
F6	Fairfield Dickinson
F8	Quinnipiac
F11	at Wagner
F11	St. Francis (Pa.)

F13	at St. Francis (N.Y.)
F18	at Md.-Baltimore County
F20	at Mount St. Mary's

LOUISIANA STATE

N16	Texas-Pan American
N21	McNeese State
N25	North Carolina A&T
N30	at Houston
D12	Jackson State
D16	Trine View A&M
D19	Texas
D22	Troy State
D29	Belmont
J2	Arkansas
J6	at Tennessee
J9	Auburn
J13	Alabama
J16	at Mississippi State
J20	Florida
J23	Vanderbilt
J27	at Arkansas
J30	at Kentucky
F3	Mississippi
F6	at Auburn
F10	at Alabama
F13	at Arizona
F17	South Carolina
F20	at Georgia
F24	Mississippi State
F27	at Mississippi

LOUISIANA TECH

N23	at Southeast Missouri State
N30	at Northwestern State
D4-5	Pizza Hut Classic
D11-12	Cougar Classic
D19	Bucknell
D22	at Texas-Pan American
D27-28	Cowboy Shootout
J4	at Southwest Louisiana
J9	South Alabama
J13	Arkansas-Little Rock
J16	at South Alabama
J21	at New Orleans
J23	Southwestern Louisiana
J28	Arkansas State
J30	Florida International
F1	Texas-Pan American
F4	at Western Kentucky
F6	at Florida International
F11	New Orleans
F13	Western Kentucky
F16	at Arkansas-Little Rock
F20	at Arkansas State

LOUISVILLE

N8	Seton Hall
N22	Western Kentucky
D5	at Mississippi
D7	Towson State
D17	at North Carolina
D19	DePaul
D21	at Dayton
D26	Kentucky
D30	Morgan State
J2	at Michigan State
J6	St. Louis
J10	at South Florida
J13	at Marquette
J17	at DePaul
J21	Cincinnati
J23	UCLA
J28	at St. Louis
J30	UNC Charlotte
F4	Memphis
F6	Marquette
F11	at UNC Charlotte
F14	Georgia Tech
F16	Houston
F18	at Tulane
F21	at Cincinnati
F25	UAB
F27	at Southern Mississippi
*Indianapolis	

LOYOLA OF CHICAGO

N14	at Wisconsin
N17	at Chicago State
N21	Eastern Illinois
N23	at Bradley
N28	Youngstown State
D5	at Drake
D8	at Portland
D12	Indiana State
D20	Akron
D23	Western Michigan
D29	at Oakland
J2	Wright State
J7	Butler
J7	at Cleveland State
J9	at Detroit
J12	Wisconsin-Milwaukee
J18	Wisconsin-Green Bay
J23	at Illinois-Chicago
J28	at Wright State
J30	at Butler
F4	Detroit
F6	Cleveland State
F8	at Wisconsin-Green Bay
F11	at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
F20	Illinois-Chicago

LOYOLA (MD.)

N14	Howard
N19-21	Battle of Baltimore Classic
N28	at Kent
D2	at Siena
D5	Fairfield
D7	Denver

D19	Mount St. Mary's
D30	Virginia
J2	at Iowa
J6	Manhattan
J10	at Rider
J13	Iona
J16	at Niagara
J18	at Canisius
J21	Siena
J23	at Fairfield
J27	at Marist
J29	at Manhattan
F2	at Denver
F5	Marist
F7	St. Peter's
F12	Rider
F14	at St. Peter's
F18	Canisius
F20	Niagara

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT

N17	Long Beach State
N21	Boise State
N25	Southern California
N28	at UC Santa Barbara
D2	Cal State Fullerton
D5	San Diego State
D9	at Southern California
D12	Pacific
D19	at Utah
D21	at Xavier
D29	at UCLA
J2	California Baptist
J7	at Gonzaga
J9	at Portland
J15	San Francisco
J16	Santa Clara
J21	at San Diego
J23	at St. Mary's
J29	St. Mary's
J30	San Diego
F3	Pepperdine
F6	at Pepperdine
F12	at Santa Clara
F13	at San Francisco
F19	Portland
F20	Gonzaga

MAINE

N14	Hampton
N17	at Northwestern
N21	at Fairfield Dickinson
N23	at Vermont
N28	at Brown
N30	Providence
D12	Hartford
D19-20	UNO Christmas Classic
D30	Sacred Heart
J2	Drexel
J4	Hofstra
J10	at Boston University
J12	at Northeastern
J16	New Hampshire
J22	at Delaware
J24	at Towson
J27	Vermont
J30	at Drexel
F1	at Hofstra
F4	Northeastern
F6	Boston University
F10	at Hartford
F14	at New Hampshire
F18	at Delaware
F20	Towson

MANHATTAN

N28	at Fairfield Dickinson
D1	Buffalo
D4	at Rider
D6	Marist
D10	Army
D22	at Boston University
D27	Fordham
D30	at Delgate
J2	at Delgate
J6	at Loyola (Md.)
J9	at Lehigh
J12	Niagara
J15	at Iona
J17	at Fairfield
J21	at Niagara
J23	at Canisius
J26	Fairfield
J29	Loyola (Md.)
J31	Rider
F3	at St. Peter's
F6	Siena
F8	Canisius
F11	at Siena
F13	at Siena
F18	at Marist
F21	St. Peter's

MARIST

F8	Canisius
F11	at Siena
F13	at Iona
F18	at Marist
F21	St. Peter's
MARIST	
N24 Middle Tennessee State
N27-28 Pepsi-Marist Classic
D1	Harvard
D4	Siena
D6	at Manhattan
D9	at American
D12	at Cornell
D22	at Arizona State
D30	Army
J3	Fairfield
J5	at St. Peter's
J8	Canisius
J10	Niagara
J16	at Canisius

MERCER

N13	at Georgia
N16	at Winthrop
N19	at Kentucky
N21	at Wake Forest
N28	at Coastal Carolina
D5	Covenant College
D9	at Furman
D19	UNC Asheville
D29-30	Cessna Classic
J2	at Jacksonville
J4	at Sanford
J7	at Jacksonville
J9	at Sanford
J14	at Troy State
J16	Campbell
J19	Georgia State
J23	at Stetson
J25	at Jacksonville
J30	Centenary
F4	at Central Florida
F6	at Florida Atlantic
F13	at Jacksonville
F15	Stetson
F18	Troy State
F20	at Georgia State

MIAMI (FLA.)

N13	at Florida Atlantic
N27	at UNC Charlotte
N28	at Northern Iowa
D5	at Kentucky
D8	Boston College
D11	Central Florida
D18	at Georgia State
D22	Memphis
D27	Ohio State
J6	St. John's
J9	Notre Dame
J12	at Rutgers
J20	Connecticut
J24	at Boston College
J27	Seton Hall
J30	at Pittsburgh
F3	at St. John's
F8	at Syracuse
F13	at Connecticut
F20	at Connecticut
F23	Pittsburgh
F27	Rutgers

MIAMI OF OHIO

N13	at Notre Dame
N19	Tennessee
N22	Dayton
N27	Boston University
D2	at Xavier
D5	at Wisconsin-Green Bay
D8	Marshall
D12	at Central Michigan
D22-23	Coors Light Classic
D30	at Northern Illinois
J6	Western Michigan
J6	at Eastern Michigan
J8	at Toledo
J13	at Toledo
J20	at Kent
J23	at Marshall
J28	Bowling Green
F3	Ohio University
F6	at Western Michigan
F10	at Ball State
F13	Eastern Michigan
F17	at Toledo
F20	at Bowling Green
F24	Kent

*Halifax, Nova Scotia

MICHIGAN

N13	at Florida International
N16	at Ball State
N19	Detroit
N23-25	Maul Invitational
N30	Towson
D2	Bradley
D6	Western Michigan
D9	at Eastern Michigan
D12	at Duke
D21	Hampton
D27	Florida
D30	Wisconsin
J2	at Penn State
J5	Indiana
J6	at Michigan State
J16	Ohio State
J20	at Minnesota
J23	at Purdue
J28	Illinois
J30	Iowa
F7	at Northwestern
F9	at Ohio State
F11	Michigan State
F21	at Indiana
F25	Penn State
F28	at Wisconsin

*Grand Rapids, Mich.

*Miami

MICHIGAN STATE

N13	at Northeast Louisiana
N17	at Oakland University
N20	at Temple
N27-28	Coca-Cola Spartan Classic
D5	Duke
D5	at Connecticut
D10	at East Tennessee State

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE

D13	Illinois-Chicago
D21-23	Pearl Harbor Classic
D30	UNC Asheville
J2	Louisville
J6	at Wisconsin
J9	Michigan
J13	Minnesota
J16	at Illinois
J21	Jowa
J24	at Indiana
J27	Ohio State
J30	Northwestern
F2	at Penn State
F6	at Iowa
F11	Illinois
F13	at Minnesota
F16	Purdue
F18	at Michigan
F20	Wisconsin
F28	Purdue
	Chicago

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE

N16	East Tennessee
N21	Erskine
N24	at Marist
N28	at East Tennessee
N30	North Carolina
D3	at Western Kentucky
D5	Tennessee Tech
D12-13	Belmont
D21-22	P. Rico Holiday Shootout
J2	at UT-Martin
J4	at Murray State
J7	Southeast Missouri
J9	Eastern Illinois
J12	at Tennessee Tech
J14	at Tennessee State
J18	at Austin Peay
J21	Morehead State
J23	Eastern Kentucky
J28	UT-Martin
J30	Murray State
F1	at Belmont
F4	at Southeast Missouri
F6	at Eastern Illinois
F11	Tennessee State
F13	Austin Peay
F18	at Morehead State
F20	at Eastern Kentucky

MINNESOTA

N21	Appalachian State
N24	Seton Hall
N28	at Winthrop
N30	at Kansas State
D4	at Fresno State
D12	Eastern Michigan
D15	Cincinnati
D19	at Nebraska
D22	Montana State
D29	Sacramento State
J2	at Purdue
J6	at Northwestern
J9	Penn State
J13	at Michigan State
J16	Iowa
J20	at Ohio State
J23	Indiana
J30	at Wisconsin
F3	Illinois
F7	at Michigan
F10	at Iowa
F13	Michigan State
F17	at Penn State
F25	Purdue
F27	at Northwestern

MISSISSIPPI

N13	Alabama State
N16	Belmont
N18	at Temple
N23	Alabama A&M
N28	Austin Peay
D2	at Northeast Louisiana
D5	Louisville
D9	West Alabama
D12	at Memphis
D21-23	P. Rico Holiday Shootout
D29	Prairie View A&M
J2	at Vanderbilt
J6	Alabama
J13	at Arkansas
J16	Auburn
J19	Kentucky
J20	Mississippi State
J23	Georgia
J27	at South Carolina
J30	Arkansas
F3	at Louisiana State
F6	at Florida
F10	at Auburn
F17	Tennessee
F20	at Mississippi State
F24	at Alabama
F27	Louisiana State

MISSISSIPPI STATE

N17	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
N21	Northwestern State
N25	Belmont
F2	UT-Martin
F2	Sam Houston State
D2	Jacksonville State
D8	Centenary
D12	Southeastern Louisiana
D21-22	Golden Bear Classic
D28-30	Rainbow Classic

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE

N16	Jacksonville State
N19	Talladega
N30	Toledo
D2	Kansas State
D7	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
D10	Southern Mississippi
D22	Creighton
D29-30	Cessna Classic
J2	Alabama A&M
J4	Alabama State
J9	Alcorn State
J11	Southern
J16	Prairie View A&M
J18	Texas Southern
J23	Jackson State
J25	Grambling State
J30	Alabama A&M
F1	Alabama State
F6	Alcorn State
F8	Southern
F13	Prairie View A&M
F15	Texas Southern
F22	Jackson State
F27	Grambling State
F27	Arkansas-Pine Bluff

MISSOURI

N13	Jackson State
N18	Southwest Missouri State
N23	Austin Peay State
N29	Southwest Texas State
D5	Idaho
D9	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
D19	Iowa
D22	Illinois
D30	Centenary
J2	Nebraska
J6	at Kansas State
J9	at Kansas State
J11	at Kansas State
J16	at Colorado
J24	at Kansas State
J27	Kansas State
J30	at Baylor
F3	Texas Tech
F6	at Nebraska
F8	at Iowa State
F13	Colorado
F15	Oklahoma
F20	at Oklahoma State
F24	Jowa State
F27	at Texas
	*St. Louis

MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY

N14	at South Alabama
N18	Creighton
N21	William Penn
N23	at Southwest Missouri State
N27-29	Honolulu Shootout
D5	at Valparaiso
D7	at IUPUI
D12	at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
D16	Texas-San Antonio
D19	at Kansas State
D22	Cal Poly-SLO
D30	Nebraska
J2	Chicago State
J4	Western Illinois
J7	Oral Roberts
J9	at Southern Utah
J14	at Youngstown State
J16	at Oakland University
J21	Southern Utah
J28	at Western Illinois
F4	at Chicago State
F6	Valparaiso
F10	IUPUI
F13	at Denver
F18	at Oral Roberts
F20	Oakland University
F20	Youngstown State

MONMOUTH

N18	Sacred Heart
N21	at Boston College
N24	at Drexel
N28	Princeton
D7	Quinnipiac
D12	at Rider
D22	St. Peter's
J2	at Robert Morris
J4	at St. Francis (Pa.)
J7	at St. Francis (Pa.)
J9	Long Island
J11	Fairleigh Dickinson
J14	at St. Francis (N.Y.)
J16	Maryland-Baltimore Co.
J18	at Wagner
J21	at Mount St. Mary's
J23	at Maryland-Baltimore Co.

MONMOUTH STATE

N19	Southern Utah
N23	Carroll College
N28	at Idaho
D21	at St. Mary's
D5	San Jose State
D11-12	KGVO/Coca Classic
D15	Evergreen State
D19	at Youngstown State
D27	at Illinois-Chicago
J2	at Montana State
J7	at Idaho State
J9	at Weber State
J13	at Northern Arizona
J17	at Portland State
J23	at Eastern Washington
J27	at Sacramento State
J30	at Montana State
F4	Weber State
F7	Idaho State
F11	at Cal State Northridge
F13	at Northern Arizona
F18	Sacramento State
F25	Portland State
F28	Eastern Washington
	*Billings, Mont.

MONTANA

N19	Southern Utah
N23	Carroll College
N28	at Idaho
D21	at St. Mary's
D5	San Jose State
D11-12	KGVO/Coca Classic
D15	Evergreen State
D19	at Youngstown State
D27	at Illinois-Chicago
J2	at Montana State
J7	at Idaho State
J9	at Weber State
J13	at Northern Arizona
J17	at Portland State
J23	at Eastern Washington
J27	at Sacramento State
J30	at Montana State
F4	Weber State
F7	Idaho State
F11	at Cal State Northridge
F13	at Northern Arizona
F18	Sacramento State
F25	Portland State
F28	Eastern Washington
	*Billings, Mont.

MONTANA STATE

N13	Simon Fraser
N20	Concordia (Calif.)
N27	Wyoming
D1	at San Francisco
D5	Carroll
D8	San Francisco
D10	at Cal State Fullerton
D12	at San Diego
D22	at Minnesota
D28-29	Bobcat Holiday Classic
J2	at Montana
J7	at Weber State
J9	at Idaho State
J14	at Cal State Northridge
J16	at Northern Arizona
J21	at Eastern Washington
J23	at Portland State
J25	at Cal State Montana
J30	at Montana State
F4	Cal State Sacramento
F6	Idaho State
F11	at Northern Arizona
F13	at Cal State Northridge
F20	at Weber State
F25	Eastern Washington
F27	Portland State

MOREHEAD STATE

N16	Huntington
N18	at Vanderbilt
N24	at Marshall
N28	Bucknell
D3	Murray State
D5	UT-Martin
D17	Jacksonville State
D19	at Wright State
D21	at Florida
D29	at Evansville
J2	at Eastern Illinois
J4	at Southeast Missouri
J7	Austin Peay
J9	Tennessee State
J12	at Murray State
J16	at Eastern Kentucky
J21	at Middle Tennessee State
J23	at Tennessee Tech
J28	Eastern Illinois
J30	Southeast Missouri
F2	at UT-Martin
F4	at Austin Peay
F6	at Tennessee State
F13	Eastern Kentucky
F18	Middle Tennessee
F20	Tennessee Tech

MORGAN STATE

N13	at James Madison
N16	at Marquette
N19-21	Battle of Baltimore Classic
D2	at Georgetown
D7	Howard
D12	at Coppin State
D20	at Iona
D30	at Louisville
J2	at South Carolina State
J4	at North Carolina A&T
J9	Florida A&M
J11	Bethune-Cookman
J16	at Middle Eastern Shore
J18	at Delaware State
J23	at Norfolk State
J25	Hampton
J30	at Howard
F6	South Carolina State
F10	at Florida A&M
F13	at Florida A&M
F15	at Bethune-Cookman
F20	at Middle Eastern Shore
F22	Delaware State
F27	Coppin State

MOUNT ST. MARY'S

N14	La Salle
N22	at Santa Clara
N28	at Villanova
D3	at Md.-Baltimore County
D6	Bucknell
D7	St. Francis (Pa.)
D10	at Central Connecticut State
D12	at Quinnipiac
D20	at Loyola (Md.)
F30	at Georgia Tech
J2	at Long Island
J4	at St. Francis (N.Y.)
J7	Robert Morris
J9	Wagner
J11	Md.-Baltimore County
J16	at St. Francis (Pa.)
J18	at Robert Morris
J21	Monmouth
J23	at Fairleigh Dickinson
J28	Quinnipiac
J30	Fairleigh Dickinson
F4	at Monmouth
F6	at Wagner
F13	Central Connecticut State
F18	St. Francis (N.Y.)
F20	Long Island
	*Harrisburg, Pa.

MURRAY STATE

N14	Southern Illinois
N21	at Belmont
N27-28	Sooner Holiday Classic
D3	at Morehead State
D5	at Eastern Kentucky
D8	Hanover College
D12	at Alabama State
D19	Western Kentucky
D27-30	Rainbow Classic
J2	Tennessee Tech
J4	Middle Tennessee
J9	UT-Martin
J14	at Southeast Missouri
J16	at Eastern Illinois
J21	Tennessee State
J23	Austin Peay
J28	at Tennessee Tech
J30	at Middle Tennessee
F2	Eastern Kentucky
F6	at UT-Martin
F11	Southeast Missouri
F13	Eastern Illinois
F18	at Tennessee State
F20	at Austin Peay

NAVY

N16	Rice
N20	Northeastern
N23	Davidson
N28	at Air Force
D3	at Belmont
D5	at Wofford
D7	U.S. Coast Guard
D19	Auburn
D21	Dartmouth
D23	at Md.-Baltimore County
D28-29	Arizona State Xmas Cl.
J2	Gettysburg
J4	Harvard
J9	Bucknell
J12	Lafayette
J17	Holy Cross
J19	at Army
J23	at Lehigh
J27	Colgate
J31	at Bucknell
F3	at Lafayette
F10	at Holy Cross
F13	Army
F17	Lehigh
F20	at Colgate

NEBRASKA

N28	North Carolina A&T
D1	Tulsa
D4-5	Ameritas Classic
D9	Creighton
D12	at Colorado State
D19	Minnesota
D27	at San Francisco
D30	at Missouri-Kansas City
J2	at Missouri
J10	Texas
J13	Kansas State
J16	at Baylor
J20	at Oklahoma
J23	Colorado
J27	Kansas
J30	at Iowa State
J33	at Colorado
F6	Missouri
F10	at Kansas
F13	Iowa State
F17	Oklahoma State
F20	at Texas Tech
F24	at Kansas State
F27	Texas A&M
NEVADA	
N14	at San Diego State

	at San Diego	D11-12	Boilermaker Invitational	J2	Portland	F13	Boston College	D7	at Old Dominion	J9	at Mercer	F18	at St. Mary's
F13	San Diego	D19	Butler	J7	Wyoming	F16	at Connecticut	D10	Tennessee	J14	Jacksonville State	F20	at San Diego
F19	St. Mary's	D22	South Carolina	J9	Colorado State	F21	at Seton Hall	D12	Akron	J16	at Centenary	SAN JOSE STATE	
F19	at Loyola Marymount	D27	at Providence	J14	at UNLV	F23	Georgetown	D21-23	P. Rico Holiday Shootout	J21	at Campbell	N13	at Arizona State
F21	at Pepperdine	J6	Minnesota	J16	at Air Force	F27	at Miami	D29-30	Cable Car Classic	J23	at Georgia State	N18	at St. Mary's
PORTLAND STATE				J23	Tulsa	ST. BONAVENTURE				J30	Central Florida	N22	Cal State Northridge
N7	Simon Fraser	J6	at Penn State	J28	Southern Methodist	N17	Liberty	J6	at Dayton	F1	Florida Atlantic	N24	at Pacific
N23	San Diego	J13	at Wisconsin	F4	Texas Christian	N21	Canisius	J9	Virginia Tech	F4	at Jacksonville	N27	Menlo College
N25	Cascade	J16	Indiana	F8	at Colorado State	N24	at Siena	J16	Fordham	F6	at Stetson	D1	Santa Clara
N28	Cal Poly-SLO	J19	at Ohio State	F6	at Wyoming	N27	Rider	J20	Massachusetts	F13	Georgia State	D5	at Montana
D2	at Washington State	J23	Michigan	F11	at Air Force	N30	at Southern California	J23	at La Salle	F15	at Jacksonville State	D9	at Cal State Sacramento
D5	Air Force	J27	at Northwestern	F13	UNLV	D5	at Kent State	J27	at Rhode Island	D20	Centenary	D19	Eastern Washington
D12	at Oregon	F4	Iowa	F20	at Tulsa	D12	at Niagara	F1	Pennsylvania	D22	Portland	D27	Cal State Fullerton
D28-29	Lobo Invitational	F9	Ohio State	F25	at Texas Christian	D18-19	Nike Festival	F4	Xavier	N15	at Tulsa	D30	UC Santa Barbara
J4	Weber State	F13	at Indiana	F27	Southern Methodist	D27	at Syracuse	F7	at Massachusetts	N19	St. Edward's	J7	Pepperdine
J9	at Northern Arizona	F16	at Michigan State	N14	Campbell	D29	Delaware State	F9	Temple	N23	at Houston	J14	Fresno State
J16	Idaho State	F20	Penn State	N19	at Connecticut	J6	at St. Joseph's	F12	at George Washington	N30	at Mississippi State	J17	Texas-El Paso
J17	Sacramento State	F25	at Minnesota	N21	at Liberty	J6	at St. Joseph's	F16	at Fordham	D3	Texas A&M	J16	New Mexico
J21	Montana	F28	Michigan State	N28	Radford	J13	at Xavier	F18	Drexel	D5	at Wisconsin-Milwaukee	J21	Brigham Young
J23	Montana State	*Chase NIT	Indianapolis	D1	Drexel	J16	at Virginia Tech	F21	Rhode Island	D17	at Oklahoma	J23	at Utah
J28	at Weber State	*East Rutherford, N.J.	Indianapolis	D5	at William & Mary	J19	at Buffalo	F25	Duquesne	D20	at Florida State	J30	San Diego State
J30	Eastern Washington	QUINNIPIAC				J24	at Fordham	F27	at St. Bonaventure	D28	Texas-Arlington	J30	Hawaii
F4	at Eastern Washington	N15	at Connecticut	D28	Florida Atlantic	J28	La Salle	ST. LOUIS				D30	Stephen F. Austin
F11	at Sacramento State	N18	Army	D30	at Fordham	J30	Temple	N13	Arkansas State	J2	at Northeast Louisiana	D32	at Fresno State
F13	at Idaho State	N21	at Columbia	J2	East Carolina	F6	Dayton	N20	at Illinois	J4	at Northwestern State	F11	at New Mexico
F18	Northern Arizona	D1	at Syracuse	J4	Southern Methodist	F10	at Massachusetts	N23	at San Francisco	J7	Nicholls State	F13	Texas-El Paso
F20	Cal State Northridge	D7	at Monmouth	J9	UNC Wilmington	F14	at Duquesne	N27-29	Big Island Invitational	J14	at McNeese State	F18	Utah
F25	at Montana	D10	Md.-Baltimore County	J11	James Madison	F16	at Rhode Island	D5	Grambling	J16	at Lamar	F20	Brigham Young
F27	at Montana State	D12	Mount St. Mary's	J13	at George Mason	F20	Fordham	D12	Cal State Fullerton	J21	Southwest Texas State	F25	at Hawaii
PRAIRIE VIEW A&M				J18	at Old Dominion	F24	Rhode Island	D15	at Southern Illinois	J28	Northwestern State	F27	at San Diego State
N19	at Tulane	D21	at Brown	J20	at American	F27	St. Joseph's	D20	UNC Charlotte	J30	Northeast Louisiana	SANTA CLARA	
N23	at Southern	D23	at Fairfield Dickinson	J23	Virginia Commonwealth	N16	at Lehigh	D23	Kansas	F4	at Nicholls State	N14	at Pacific
N25	at Alcorn State	J2	Central Connecticut State	J27	George Mason	N25	at Northwestern	D28	Kansas State	F6	at Southeastern Louisiana	N19	at UCLA
D3	at Pittsburgh	J5	at Siena	J30	UNC Wilmington	N30	at St. John's	J9	Southwest Missouri State	F11	Lamar	D22	Mount St. Mary's
D16	at Louisiana State	J9	St. Francis (Pa.)	F6	American	D5	Robert Morris	J18	at Louisville	F13	McNeese State	D1	at San Jose State
D19	at Cleveland State	J11	at Wagner	F8	Old Dominion	D7	Wagner	J13	Tulane	D20	Texas-San Antonio	D4-5	Carrier Classic
D21	at Wright State	J16	at Robert Morris	F10	at James Madison	D10	at Monmouth	J16	at Houston	F25	at Stephen F. Austin	D17	UC Santa Barbara
D29	at Mississippi	J18	at St. Francis (Pa.)	F13	at Virginia Commonwealth	D15	at Iowa	J20	at Marquette	F27	at Texas-Arlington	D21-22	Stanford Invitational
J9	Grambling State	J23	Robert Morris	F17	at East Carolina	D27	at Notre Dame	J23	South Florida	SAN DIEGO			
J16	at Mississippi Valley State	J28	at Mount St. Mary's	F20	William & Mary	D29-30	Dr. Pepper Classic	J28	at Cincinnati	N17	Concordia	J8	St. Mary's
J18	at Arkansas-Pine Bluff	J30	at Md.-Baltimore County	RIDER				J28	Louisville	N21	at Eastern Washington	J9	San Diego
J23	Alabama State	F4	at St. Francis (N.Y.)	N18	at Bucknell	J4	Mount St. Mary's	F30	Marquette	N23	at Portland State	J15	at Pepperdine
J25	Alabama A&M	F6	at Long Island	N23	at Delaware	J7	at Morehead	F6	at UNC Charlotte	N23	at Cal State Northridge	J16	at Loyola Marymount
J30	at Texas Southern	F8	Monmouth	N27	at St. Bonaventure	J11	at Central Connecticut State	F8	Murray State	D3	at Northern Arizona	J23	at Gonzaga
F2	Texas Southern	F11	St. Francis (N.Y.)	D7	at Fairfield	J18	Central Connecticut State	F11	at DePaul	D12	at Texas	J28	at Gonzaga
F6	at Grambling State	F18	Fairleigh Dickinson	D12	Monmouth	J21	at Wagner	F18	Cincinnati	D19	at San Diego State	J30	at Portland
F8	at Jackson State	F20	at Central Connecticut State	D22	at Villanova	J28	at St. Francis (Pa.)	F20	at Memphis	D22-23	Coors Light Classic	F6	at San Francisco
F13	Mississippi Valley State	J2	St. Peter's	D29-30	Dr. Pepper Classic	J30	at St. Francis (Pa.)	F27	at UAB	D30	Occidental	F12	Loyola Marymount
F15	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	N17	Concord	J8	at St. Peter's	F4	Quinnipiac	ST. MARY'S				F14	Pepperdine
F20	at Alabama State	N21	Davis & Elkins	J10	Loyola (Md.)	F6	at Fairleigh Dickinson	N13	at Kansas State	J8	at San Francisco	F18	at San Diego
F22	at Alabama A&M	N23	St. Peter's	J13	Maryland-Eastern Shore	F11	at Quinnipiac	N18	San Jose State	J9	at Santa Clara	F20	at St. Mary's
F25	Southern	N28	at Richmond	J16	at St. Peter's	F13	Long Island	N21	at Cal State Sacramento	J13	at St. Mary's	SETON HALL	
F27	Alcorn State	N30	at Clemson	J21	at Canisius	F15	Md.-Baltimore County	N23-28	Great Alaska Shootout	J16	St. Mary's	N7	Indiana*
PRINCETON				J23	at Niagara	F18	at Mount St. Mary's	D2	Montana	J21	Loyola Marymount	N8	Louisville*
N18	at Lafayette	J28	Iona	J31	at Manhattan	F20	Md.-Baltimore County	D5	Cal State Fullerton	J23	Pepperdine	N14	St. Peter's
N21	at UNC Wilmington	J31	at Manhattan	F2	at Marist	N17	at Pittsburgh	D11-12	KGVO/Coca-Cola Classic	J29	at Pepperdine	N24	at Minnesota
N28	at Monmouth	F2	Fairfield	F6	Fairfield	N21	at UNC Greensboro	D15	at Nevada	J30	at Loyola Marymount	N29	Kean
D4-5	Cyclone Challenge	F6	at Fairfield	F12	at Marist	N28	UNC Greensboro	D19-23	UC Santa Barbara	F4	Gonzaga	D5	La Salle
D9	Bucknell	F12	at Fairfield	F14	at Siena	D3	at Bucknell	D28	Xavier	F6	Portland	D9	Villanova
D15	at UAB	F16	at Long Island	F18	Niagara	D5	Md.-Baltimore County	J8	at Santa Clara	F11	at Gonzaga	D12	at Syracuse
D19	Maryland*	J13	at UNC Asheville	F20	Canisius	D7	at Mount St. Mary's	J13	at San Francisco	F18	Santa Clara	D19	Northwestern
D27-30	Rainbow Classic	J16	Charleston Southern	ROBERT MORRIS				J16	San Diego	F20	San Francisco	D21	Army
Brown	Yale	J18	Coastal Carolina	N14	Bucknell	N17	at Mount St. Mary's	J21	Pepperdine	SAN DIEGO STATE			
J9	Union	J23	Elon	N18	at Ohio State	D12	at San Diego	J23	Loyola Marymount	N14	Nevada	J2	at Providence
J25	at Columbia	J27	at High Point	N24	at La Roche	D22	at Utah	J29	at Loyola Marymount	N18	at Southern California	J4	Georgetown
J30	at Cornell	F1	UNC Asheville	N30	at Central Michigan	D29	Md.-Eastern Shore	J29	at Pepperdine	N21	Cal State Fullerton	J9	at St. John's
F5	Harvard	F6	at Coastal Carolina	J7	at Central Connecticut State	J2	Fairleigh Dickinson	F4	Portland	N24	Utah State	J13	West Virginia
F12	Dartmouth	F8	at Charleston Southern	J9	at St. Francis (N.Y.)	J4	Monmouth	F6	Gonzaga	N28	Long Beach State	J19	at Notre Dame
F16	at Yale	F11	High Point	D7	at Long Island	J7	at Central Connecticut State	F11	at Gonzaga	D2	Southern California College	J23	at Connecticut
F18	at Brown	F13	at Elton	D10	Wagner	J16	Mount St. Mary's	F13	at Portland	D5	at Loyola Marymount	J27	at Miami
F19	at Pennsylvania	F17	Winthrop	D12	Long Island	J18	Quinnipiac	F18	at Nevada	D9	at Gonzaga	J30	Syracuse
F20	Dartmouth	F20	Liberty	D22	at Long Virginia	J21	at Fairleigh Dickinson	F20	San Francisco	D19	at Nevada	F2	at Boston College
F29	at Harvard	RHODE ISLAND				J23	at St. Francis (N.Y.)	F28	Santa Clara	D22	New Mexico State	F6	Pittsburgh
F26	Cornell	N9	Texas Christian*	D28	Brown	J28	Central Connecticut State	N14	Seton Hall	D27	Arkansas State	F13	Connecticut
F27	Columbia	N10	Vanderbilt*	J2	Monmouth	J30	St. Francis (N.Y.)	N21	at Seton Hall	J2	Pacific	F15	Rutgers
M2	Pennsylvania	N14	at Providence	J4	Fairleigh Dickinson	F4	Md.-Baltimore County	N23	at Charleston Southern	J7	at New Mexico	F25	at West Virginia
PROVIDENCE				J7	at Mount St. Mary's	F8	at Robert Morris	N28	at Radford	J9	at Texas-El Paso	F27	at Pittsburgh
N9	Vanderbilt	N24	Brown	J9	at Md.-Baltimore County	F11	at Long Island	N29	Lafayette	J14	Brigham Young	SIENA	
N10	Texas Christian	J16	Quinnipiac	J16	Quinnipiac	F13	at Wagner	D4	Niagara	J16	Utah	N14	at Bethune-Cookman
N14	Rhode Island	J18	Mount St. Mary's	J18	Mount St. Mary's	F18	at Monmouth	D6	at Canisius	J23	at Hawaii	N21	at Hartford
N21	Texas-Pan American	J21	at Central Connecticut State	J21	at Central Connecticut State	F20	Robert Morris	D9	Northeastern	J28	at San Jose State	D24	St. Bonaventure
N24	Northern Carolina State	J23	at Quinnipiac	J28	St. Francis (N.Y.)	ST. JOHN'S				J30	at Fresno State	N2	Loyola (Md.)
N28	at Cleveland State	D22	Brown	D28	Brown	N16	UNC Asheville*	D1	James Madison	F6	Texas-El Paso	D4	at Marist
N30	Maine	J2	Monmouth	F1	Fairleigh Dickinson	N23	Columbia	D31	Rider	F11	New Mexico	D8	Colgate
D5	Brown	J4	Fairleigh Dickinson	F6	Md.-Baltimore County	N30	St. Francis (N.Y.)	J5	Marist	F13	at Brigham Young	D12	Conference Challenge
D8	Notre Dame	F8	St. Francis (Pa.)	F11	St. Francis (Pa.)	D2	Hofstra	J8	Fairfield	F25	at Hawaii	D23	George Washington
D11	at Rutgers	J10	Dayton	F13	at Monmouth	D5	at Boston College	J10	Iona	F27	Fresno State	D29-30	Sparklets Invitational
D27	Purdue	J16	Fordham	F18	Central Connecticut State	D9	Pittsburgh	J14	Siena	D20	San Jose State	J2	at Niagara
D30	at Pittsburgh	J21	La Salle	F20	at St. Francis (Pa.)	D12	at Virginia	J16	Rider	SAN FRANCISCO			
J2	Seton Hall	J23	George Washington	RUTGERS				J23	at Marist	N18	at UC Santa Barbara	J5	Quinnipiac
J5	West Virginia	J27	St. Joseph's	N14	Wagner	N17	at Rutgers	J28	at Fairfield	N23	at San Francisco	J12	Fairfield
J12	at Syracuse	J30	at Duquesne	N22	at James Madison	J6	at Miami	F30	Niagara	N26-29	Puerto Rico Shootout	J14	St. Peter's
J17	at Boston College	F4	at Massachusetts	D29-30	United Airlines Tip-Off Tour	J9	Seton Hall	F3	Canisius	D4-5	Northwestern Mutual Classic	J18	Rider
J20	St. John's	F6	Temple	D3	Columbia	J11	Georgetown	F7	Manhattan	D10	at Montana State	J21	at Loyola (Md.)
J23	at Arkansas	F10	at Virginia Tech	D5	Fairleigh Dickinson	J16	at Providence	F10	at Iona	D17	at Fairfield	J24	Jona
J26	Villanova	F16	at St. Bonaventure	D8	at Georgetown	J20	Duke	F14	Loyola (Md.)	D20	at Indiana	F30	Fairfield
J30	at Notre Dame	F21	at St. Joseph's	D11	at Georgetown	J27	at Syracuse	F19	Siena	D23	at Rhode Island	F4	at Canisius
F3	at West Virginia	F28	at Fordham	D19	at Temple	J30	Connecticut	F21	at Manhattan	D27	Nebraska	F6	at Manhattan
F7	Rutgers	RICE				D29	at West Virginia	SAMFORD				F8	Niagara
F13	Miami	N13	Texas-Pan American	J2	St. John's	F3	at Pittsburgh	N18	Bethel	J8	San Diego	F11	Manhattan
F15	at St. John's	N16	at Navy	J9	Villanova	F9	at West Virginia	N23	at Northeast Louisiana	J9	St. Mary's	F14	at Rider
F20	at Villanova	N21	Houston	J12	Miami	F13	Villanova	D1	at Tulane	J15	at Loyola Marymount	F19	at St. Peter's
F22	Connecticut	N23	Missouri										

D16	Alabama A&M	J21	at Northeast Louisiana	F20	Northern Iowa	J5	Illinois State	J30	at Georgia State		UT-MARTIN	J6	Oklahoma State
D22	at Florida International	J23	at Nicholls State	F22	at Bradley	J10	Creighton	F4	Jacksonville State	N16	Lyon College	J9	Missouri
D30	at Colorado State	J28	at Lamar	*St. Louis		J13	Bradley	F6	Samford	N18	Evansville	J13	at Texas Tech
J6	at New Orleans	J30	Stephen F. Austin		SOUTHERN METHODIST	J16	Drake	F8	Jacksonville	N21	at Bradley	J16	Iowa State
J9	at Louisiana Tech	F1	at Northwestern State	N18	at Stanford	J18	at Wichita State	F13	at Troy State	N23	at Illinois	J23	at Baylor
J14	Florida International	F6	Sam Houston State	N29	Florida Atlantic	J21	Northern Iowa	F15	at Mercer	N28	at Mississippi State	J27	Texas Tech
J16	at Louisiana Tech	F11	at Texas-San Antonio	D2	at Texas Tech	J23	Indiana State	F18	Florida Atlantic	N30	Bethel	J30	at Oklahoma State
J23	Western Kentucky	F13	at Southwest Texas	D5	Alcorn State	J27	Wichita State	F20	Central Florida	D3	at Eastern Kentucky	F6	at Baylor
J25	Texas-Pan American	F17	at McNeese State	D14	Hardin-Simmons	F3	at Illinois State		SYRACUSE	D5	at Morehead State	F10	Kansas State
J28	Southwestern Louisiana	F25	Northwestern State	D16	Liberty	F6	Evansville	N17	Colgate	D14	at Ohio State	F13	at Oklahoma
J30	at Arkansas-Little Rock	F27	Northeast Louisiana	D19	UT-Chattanooga	F10	Southern Illinois	N19	Coppin State	J2	Middle Tennessee	F17	at Colorado
F4	Arkansas State			D28-29	Arizona State Xmas Cl.	F13	at Bradley	N23-25	Maul Invitational	J4	Tennessee Tech	F20	Texas
F6	Arkansas-Little Rock			J2	Texas-Pan American	F17	Creighton	D1	Quinnipiac	J9	at Murray State	F24	Oklahoma
F9	at Texas-Pan American	N14	SIU-Edwardsville	J4	at Richmond	F20	Indiana State	D4-5	Carrier Classic	J12	Eastern Kentucky	F27	at Nebraska
F13	New Orleans	N17	at Bradley	J9	Texas Christian	F22	at Evansville	D9	at West Virginia	J16	at Southeast Missouri		TEXAS-ARLINGTON
F18	at Arkansas State	N20	Central Methodist	J14	at Wyoming		Chase NIT	D12	St. Bonaventure	J21	Austin Peay	N21	at Baylor
F20	at Western Kentucky	N23	Louisiana Tech	J16	at Colorado State			D27	at Notre Dame	J23	Tennessee State	N24	McMurry College
	Birmingham	N28	at Oklahoma State	J21	at UNLV			D29	at West Virginia	J28	at Middle Tennessee	D1	at UAB
		D3	at Austin Peay	J23	Air Force			J5	at Villanova	J30	at Tennessee Tech	D5	Texas Wesleyan
		D5	at Tennessee State	J28	at Rice			J12	Providence	F2	Morehead State	D12	at Texas Tech
		D8	at Arkansas State	J30	at Tulsa			J16	at Georgetown	F6	Murray State	D16	Samford
		D12	at Southern Illinois	F6	at Texas Christian			J18	at Rutgers	F11	Eastern Illinois	D19	at Air Force
		D22	at Southwest Missouri State	F11	Colorado State			J21	Boston College	F13	Southwest Missouri	D21	at Colorado
		J2	Eastern Kentucky	F18	at Wyoming			J24	South Carolina	F15	Brescia	D28	at Sam Houston State
		J4	Morehead State	F20	at UNLV			J27	St. John's	F18	at Austin Peay	J4	Nicholls State
		J7	at Middle Tennessee	F25	Tulsa			J30	at Seton Hall	F20	at Tennessee State	J2	Southwestern Louisiana
		J9	at Tennessee Tech	F27	Rice			F1	at Connecticut			J7	at Texas-San Antonio
		J12	Austin Peay					F8	at Miami		TEXNESSEE STATE	J9	at Southwest Texas State
		J14	Murray State					F14	at Pittsburgh	N20	Trevecca Nazarene	J14	Northwestern State
		J16	UT-Martin					F17	at Notre Dame	N23	Northern Iowa	J16	Northwestern Louisiana
		J23	at Eastern Illinois					F21	at UCLA	N28	Spalding	J21	at McNeese State
		J30	at Morehead State					F24	at Boston College	D3	Eastern Illinois	J23	at Stephen F. Austin
		F2	Tennessee State					F28	at Connecticut	D5	Southwest Missouri State	J30	at Nicholls State
		F4	McNeese State							D19-20	UNO Christmas Classic	F4	McNeese State
		F6	Tennessee Tech							D28	at Kentucky	F6	Lamar
		F11	at UTM Martin							J7	at Austin Peay	F11	Stephen F. Austin
		F13	at Belmont							J9	at Eastern Kentucky	F13	at Lamar
		F18	at Belmont							J12	at Morehead State	F18	at Northwestern State
		F20	at Belmont							J14	at Middle Tennessee	F20	at Northwestern Louisiana
										J16	Tennessee Tech	F25	at Texas-San Antonio
										J21	at Murray State	F27	at Sam Houston State
										J23	at UTM Martin		TEXAS CHRISTIAN
										J28	at Belmont	N9	Rhode Island
										J30	Austin Peay State	N10	at Providence
										F2	at Southeast Missouri State	N14	Oral Roberts
										F4	at Eastern Kentucky	N18	New Orleans
										F6	at Morehead State	N21	at Texas Tech
										F11	at Middle Tennessee State	N23	Arkansas State
										F13	at Tennessee Tech	D1	at Texas Tech
										F18	Murray State	D5	Texas El Paso
										F20	at UTM Martin	D8	Texas Tech
												D19	at Southwest Missouri State
												D22	at Oklahoma State
												D30	Gonzaga
												J2	UNC Asheville
												J9	at Southern Methodist
												J14	at Colorado State
												J16	at Wyoming
												J23	Air Force
												J28	at Tulsa
												J30	at Rice
												F6	at Southern Methodist
												F11	at Wyoming
												F13	at Colorado State
												F18	at UNLV
												F20	at Air Force
													Providence, R.I.
													TEXAS-EL PASO
												N13	New Mexico State
												N21	Texas Christian
												N24	Jackson State
												N28	at New Mexico State
												D1	Texas-San Antonio
												D5	at Texas Christian
												D12	Lubbock Christian
												D14	Samford
												D17	Texas Southern
												D20	Florida International
												D22	Arkansas-Little Rock
												D28-29	Sun Coast
												J7	Hawaii
												J9	San Diego State
												J14	at San Jose State
												J16	at Fresno State
												J23	New Mexico
												J28	Brigham Young
												J30	Utah
												F4	at Hawaii
												F6	at San Diego State
												F11	Fresno State
												F13	San Jose State
												F20	at New Mexico
												F25	at Utah
												F27	at Brigham Young
													TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN
												N13	at Rice
												N16	at Louisiana State
												N21	at Providence
												N23	at Pittsburgh
												N25	Colorado State
												N28	at Illinois
												D4-5	Pizza Hut Classic
												D8	at New Mexico
												D12	at DePaul
												D17	at Texas Tech
												D22	Louisiana Tech
												D28	Gonzaga
												D30	at Baylor
												J2	at Southern Methodist
												J4	Arkansas-Little Rock
												J11	Southwestern Louisiana
												J19	at Arkansas-Little Rock
												J23	at Northwestern
												J25	at South Alabama
												J30	Denver
												F1	at Louisiana Tech
												F9	South Alabama

F16at Wyoming
F18at Denver
F22at Southwestern Louisiana
F27IUPUI

TEXAS-SAN ANTONIO

N15Ouachita Baptist (Ark.)
N19at Texas Tech
N24at Tulsa
N28Troy State
D1at Texas-El Paso
D5at Wichita State
D12at Troy State
D16at Missouri-Kansas City
D30at Northeast Louisiana
J2at Lamar
J4at McNeese State
J7Texas-Arlington
J9Stephen F. Austin
J14at Nicholls State
J16at Southeastern Louisiana
J23at Southwest Texas State
J28McNeese State
J30Northwestern State
F4at Northeast Louisiana
F6at Northwestern State
F11Southeastern Louisiana
F18Nicholls State
F19at Sam Houston State
F20Lamar
F25at Texas-Arlington
F27Southwest Texas State

TEXAS SOUTHERN

N21at Southern
N23at Alcorn State
N28at Detroit-Mercy
N30Tougaloo
D4-5Pizza Hut Classic
D15at New Mexico State
D17at Texas-El Paso
D29-30Pepsi-Onelida Classic
J9Jackson State
J11Grambling State
J16at Arkansas-Pine Bluff
J18at Mississippi Valley State
J23Alabama A&M
J25Alabama State
J30Prairie View A&M
F2at Prairie View A&M
F6at Jackson State
F8at Grambling State
F13Arkansas-Pine Bluff
F15Mississippi Valley State
F20at Alabama A&M
F25Alcorn State
F27Southern

TEXAS TECH

N19Texas-San Antonio
N21at North Texas
N25New Mexico State
N28at Southwestern Louisiana
D2Southern Methodist
D5Stephen F. Austin
D8Texas Christian
D12Texas-Arlington
D17Texas-Pan American
D21-23Pearl Harbor Classic
D30Nevada
J2Baylor
J6at Oklahoma
J9at Kansas State
J13Texas A&M
J17Oklahoma State
J23at Iowa State
J27at Texas A&M
J30Oklahoma
F3at Missouri
F8Texas
F10at Kansas
F13at Texas
F17Nebraska
F20Colorado
F24at Oklahoma State
F27at Oklahoma State

TOLEDO

N16Grand Valley State
N21Albany State
N24at George Mason
N28Oakland University
N30Mississippi Valley State
D5Ohio State
D9Xavier
D12at Dayton
D19Kent
D28at Western Michigan
D30at Alcorn
J2at Bowling Green
J6Marshall
J9Ohio University
J13at Miami of Ohio
J16at Ball State
J21Northern Illinois
J23Western Michigan
J27at Central Michigan
J30at Eastern Michigan
F6Bowling Green
F11Buffalo
F13at Marshall
F17Miami of Ohio
F20Central Michigan
F24at Northern Illinois

TOWSON STATE

N14at Creighton
N19-20Battle of Baltimore Classic
N30at Michigan
D6Lafayette
D12at Louisville
D19at Md.-Baltimore County
D30American
J2Boston University
J4Northeastern
J10at Delaware
J14at Hartford
J16at Vermont
J19Drexel
J22New Hampshire

J24Maine
J27at Hofstra
J30at Boston University
F1at Northeastern
F6Delaware
F10at Drexel
F13Hartford
F15Vermont
F18at New Hampshire
F20at Maine

TROY STATE

N16at UNLV
N28at Texas-San Antonio
D1Bethlehem
D5Florida A&M
D12Texas-San Antonio
D14Huntingdon
D19-20JUNO Christmas Classic
D22Louisiana State
D28-29Gossner Foods Classic
J2Samford
J4Jacksonville State
J7at Samford
J9at Jacksonville State
J14Mercer
J16Georgia State
J21at Stetson
J23at Jacksonville
J28Centenary
F4Campbell
F6at Central Florida
F8at Florida Atlantic
F13Stetson
F15Jacksonville
F18at Mercer
F20at Campbell

TULANE

N19Prairie View A&M
N24Nicholls State
N28Stetson
D1Samford
D5Alabama
D9at Texas A&M
D12Lamar
D28Hartford
D30UAB
J2Southern Mississippi
J7UNC Charlotte
J9at St. Louis
J14at Memphis
J16New Orleans
J21at UAB
J23Houston
J28at Marquette
J30DePaul
F3at Cincinnati
F6South Florida
F11at Southern Mississippi
F13at Houston
F18Louisville
F21at North Carolina State
F24Memphis
F27at South Florida

TULSA

N15Sam Houston State
N18Jackson State
N22at UAB
N28St. Joseph's
D1at Nebraska
D4-5First Bank Classic
D8at Rice
D12Oral Roberts
D21-23Pearl Harbor Classic
D29Cleveland State
J2at Southern Illinois
J7Colorado State
J9Wyoming
J14at Air Force
J16at UNLV
J23at Rice
J28Texas Christian
J30Southern Methodist
F4at Wyoming
F6at Colorado State
F11UNLV
F13Air Force
F20Rice
F25at Southern Methodist
F27at Texas Christian

UAB

N14Alcorn State
N18at Indiana
N22Tulsa
N24Cleveland State
N29at South Alabama
D1Texas-Arlington
D5at Western Kentucky
D8Jacksonville State
D12at Auburn
D15Princeton
D21-23P. Rico Holiday Shootout
D30at Memphis
J2Marquette
J9Houston
J14at DePaul
J16at South Florida
J21Tulane
J24UNC Charlotte
J30at Tulane
F4at Houston
F7Southern Mississippi
F11Memphis
F18South Florida
F20at Southern Mississippi
F25at Louisville
F27St. Louis

UCLA

N19Santa Clara
N26-29Puerto Rico Shootout
D2Delaware State
D5Oklahoma State*
D12UNLV
D19Cal State Northridge
D23American
D29Loyola Marymount
J2Arizona

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	Chicago State	J23	at Richmond	J39	at Arizona	N30	Belmont	D19	at Appalachian State	N28	Sacred Heart
F20	at IUPUI	J27	Wright & Mary	J14	Oregon State	N17	at Middle Tennessee State	D21	at Virginia Tech	D5	Denver
*Indianapolis	at Belmont	J30	UNC Wilmington	J16	Oregon	D8	at UAB	J2	North Carolina Wesleyan	D12	at Ball State
VANDERBILT		J35	at Old Dominion	J11	at California	D9	at Butler	J4	Belmont	D18	at Denver
N9	at Providence	F6	at American	J28	at Stanford	D19	at Murray State	J9	Radford	D14	at Northern Iowa
N14	"Rhode Island"	F3	at William & Mary	J26	Southern Illinois	D22	Southern Illinois	J12	at Liberty	D19	Morehead State
N16	Austin Peay	F10	East Carolina	F31	UCLA	D29-30	All-College Tournament	J16	High Point	D21	Prairie View A&M
N21	Notre Dame	F13	Richmond	J4	Arizona	D11	New Orleans	J20	at Elon	D28	Chicago State
N24	Morehead	F17	George Mason	F13	Arizona State	J21	at Florida International	J23	at Charlotte-Spartanburg	J2	Loyola of Chicago
N28	Ohio State	F20	James Madison	F16	at Oregon	J12	Louisiana Tech	J30	at Coastal Carolina	J4	Illinois-Chicago
N30	Florida A&M	N14	Ebon	F18	Stanford	J28	at South Alabama	J33	UNC Asheville	J9	Butler
N35	at Memphis	N16	at Penn State	F20	California	J26	at Arkansas-Little Rock	F4	Liberty	J14	Detroit
D19	Campbell	N24	Old Dominion	F25	at Southern California	F30	at Arkansas State	F6	at High Point	J21	at Wisconsin-Milwaukee
D22	at Oregon	D2	Wake Forest	F28	at UCLA	F22	Florida International	F11	Coastal Carolina	J23	at Wisconsin-Green Bay
D30	Alabama A&M	D5	at Ebon	M6	Washington State	F13	Louisiana Tech	F13	Charleston Southern	J28	Loyola of Chicago
J6	Mississippi	D7	Randolph-Macon	*Chicago		F10	Southwestern Louisiana	F11	at Radford	F30	Illinois-Chicago
J2	at Florida	D10	at UNC Greensboro	WASHINGTON STATE		F16	Arkansas-Little Rock	F20	at UNC Asheville	J3	Butler
J9	Kentucky	D18	Shenandoah	N19-22	Top of the World Classic	F13	at Louisiana Tech	WISCONSIN		F11	at Cleveland State
J13	Georgia	D2	at Georgia	N28	at Gonzaga	F18	at New Orleans	N14	Loyola of Chicago	F13	at Detroit
D20	South Carolina	J2	at East Tennessee State	D5	at Eastern Washington	F20	South Alabama	N16	Wisconsin-Milwaukee	F18	Wisconsin-Green Bay
J23	at Louisiana State	J4	Davidson	D8	Brighton Young	WESTERN MICHIGAN		N20-22	Top of the World Classic	F20	Wisconsin-Milwaukee
J27	Tennessee	J9	at Appalachian State	D20	at Idaho	N16	at Indiana State	N28	at Rhode Island	*Cincinnati	
F30	at South Carolina	J11	at Western Carolina	D28-29	Sun Classic	N24	Wisconsin-Milwaukee	D2	Northern Illinois	WYOMING	
F3	Georgia	J16	Georgia Southern	J3	Washington*	D27-28	Coca-Cola Sport Classic	D9	at Illinois State	N17	Denver
F6	Arkansas	J25	Wofford	J7	at Arizona	D21	at Temple	D5	at Temple	N23	at Nevada
F10	at Mississippi State	J28	Western State	J17	at Arizona State	D12	Pepperdine	D9	at Pepperdine	N27	at Montana State
F13	Tennessee	J15	at Davidson	J14	Oregon	D19	Oakland University	D1	at Texas	D23	Idaho State
F17	at Auburn	J27	Southern Virginia	J16	Oregon State	D23	Marshall	D23	at Marquette	D9	Arizona*
F21	Alabama	J30	at Furman	J21	at Stanford	D28	at Loyola of Chicago	D27	Fresno State	D20	Colorado
F24	at Kentucky	F1	at The Citadel	J28	at California	D2	Toledo	D37	at Michigan	D12	at North Texas
F27	Florida	F6	East Tennessee State	J28	UCLA	J5 or 6	at Miami of Ohio	J2	Ohio State	D21	Alcorn State
*Providence, R.I.		F8	at College of Charleston	J30	Southern California	J9	Ohio University	J6	Michigan State	D27-28	Cowboy Shootout
VERMONT		F15	Appalachian State	F4	Arizona State	J9	Northern Illinois	D13	at Purdue	D31	Dartmouth
N13	at Lehigh	F18	UNC Greensboro	F13	Arizona	J16	at Ball State	D1	at Penn State	J7	at Rice
N18	Dartmouth	F20	UT-Chattanooga	F11	at Oregon	J23	at Central Michigan	J16	at Northwestern	J9	at Tulsa
N21	Holy Cross	VERGINIA TECH		F13	at Oregon State	J27	Eastern Michigan	J23	Illinois	J14	Southern Methodist
N23	Maine	N14	William & Mary	F18	California	F30	Buffalo	J20	at Iowa	J16	Texas Christian
N27-28	Pepsi-Marist Classic	N19	East Tennessee State	F10	Stanford	F3	at Akron	F30	Minnesota	J23	at Colorado State
D4-5	First Bank Classic	N24	at Liberty	F25	at UCLA	F10	Miami of Ohio	J28	at Indiana	J28	at UNLV
D9	Yale	D1	UNC Asheville	F27	at Southern California	F6	Ball State	F6	at Illinois	J30	at St. George
J4	at Hartford	D5	at UNC Charlotte	M6	at Washington	F20	at Eastern Michigan	F13	Northeastern	F4	Tulsa
J8	Drexel	D12	Wake Forest	*Spokane		F31	at Northern Illinois	F20	Penn State	F5	Rice
J10	Hofstra	D19	at West Virginia	WEBER STATE		F24	at Michigan State	F20	at Michigan State	F11	at Texas Christian
J14	Towson	D23	at Massachusetts	N19	at Southern Utah	F28	at Ohio State	F20	at Ohio State	F13	at Southern Methodist
J22	at New Hampshire	N14	Xavier	N14	Brighton Young	WEST VIRGINIA		F28	Michigan	F16	Texas-Pan American
J26	at Boston University	J6	at Xavier	N18	at UNLV	N18	Alabama A&M	WISCONSIN-GREEN BAY		F25	Colorado State
J24	at Northeastern	J12	at St. Joseph's	D1	Boise State	N27-29	Big Island Invitational	N18	at Illinois State	F25	Air Force
J27	at Maine	J16	at La Salle	D4-5	Northwestern Mutual Classic	D9	at UMass Lowell	N21	at Northern Michigan	F27	UNLV
J31	Hartford	D19	St. Bonaventure	D9	at Utah	D2	Syracuse	D27-29	Big Island Invitational	*Phoenix	
J35	at Drexel	J21	at Dayton	D12	Mesa State	D9	East Carolina	D9	Miami of Ohio	N17	at Butler
J38	at Hofstra	J21	at Xavier	D15	Seattle University	D17	at Ohio University	D10	at East Carolina	N21	Chicago State
F10	New Hampshire	J21	at Virginia	D19	Utah State	D17	at Ohio University	D19	Northern Iowa	N23	at Chicago State
F13	at Delaware	F31	La Salle	D21-23	Pearl Harbor Classic	D22	Robert Morris	D19	Bowling Green	N27	Morgan State
F15	at Towson	J2	at Duquesne	J2	at Sacramento State	D29	Rutgers	D22	Valparaiso	N26-29	Puerto Rico Shootout
F19	Boston University	F6	George Washington	J4	at Portland State	J2	at Syracuse	D29-30	Pepsi-Orinda Classic	D2	Miami of Ohio
N21	Northeastern	F10	Rhode Island	J7	Montana State	J5	at Providence	J2	Cleveland State	D5	Purdue
N16	George Mason	F13	at Fordham	F16	Montana	J9	Connecticut	D9	Detroit	D9	at Toledo
N20-22	Top of the World Classic	F16	Temple	J16	at Idaho State	J13	at Seton Hall	D9	at Wisconsin-Milwaukee	D19	at Central Michigan
N28	Mount St. Mary's	F24	Dayton	J16	at Eastern Washington	J3	Providence	J18	at Illinois-Chicago	D21	Loyola Marymount
N25	at St. Joseph's	F27	at George Washington	J21	at Cal State Northridge	F6	at Boston College	J16	at Loyola of Chicago	D28	at St. Mary's (Calif.)
D5	at Penn State	F24	Duquesne	J23	at Northern Arizona	F9	St. John's	J21	Butler	J3	Rhode Island
D9	at Seton Hall	N14	at Rutgers	J28	Eastern Washington	F28	at Notre Dame	J23	Wright State	J6	at Virginia Tech
D15	Massachusetts	N27	at Connecticut	J28	Portland State	F14	at Pittsburgh	J28	at Cleveland State	J3	at Duquesne
D22	Rider	D5	at Long Island	F4	at Montana	F21	at Notre Dame	J28	at Cleveland State	J13	St. Bonaventure
D28	Howard	D7	at St. Francis (N.Y.)	F6	Sacramento State	F25	Seton Hall	F8	Loyola of Chicago	J17	George Washington
D30	at Connecticut	D10	at Robert Morris	F18	at Idaho State	D2	Seton Hall	F11	at UNC Wilmington	J20	at Fordham
D5	Syracuse	D12	at St. Francis (Pa.)	F20	at Montana State	F15	Illinois-Chicago	F18	at UNC Wilmington	J28	at Cincinnati
J9	at Rutgers	D19	at St. Peter's	F25	Cal State Northridge	F18	at Wright State	D2	at Wright State	J30	at Dayton
J13	Boston College	D27-28	Cowboy Shootout	F27	at Northern Arizona	F22	at Butler	WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE		F4	at St. Joseph's
J16	Notre Dame	J2	at Baltimore County	N14	at Maryland	N18	Florida Atlantic	N16	at Wisconsin	F6	at La Salle
J19	Pittsburgh	J4	Central Connecticut State	N19	at Clemson	N27-29	United Airlines Travel Tour	N21	at Wisconsin	F9	Duquesne
J26	at Providence	J7	at Md.-Baltimore County	N21	Anderson	D8	Texas-San Antonio	N12	at Western Michigan	F16	Temple
J35	Rutgers	J9	at Mount St. Mary's	N24	at Tennessee	D19	at Kansas State	N28	at Indiana State	F20	at Massachusetts
F3	at Syracuse	J28	at Quinnipiac	N27-28	Sooner Holiday Classic	D29-30	at Illinois State	D8	at Indiana State	F24	at Dayton
F13	at St. John's	F16	at Fairleigh Dickinson	D1	at Arkansas	D12	Illinois State	D9	at Marquette	F27	at George Washington
F20	Providence	J18	at Fairleigh Dickinson	D10	Newberry	J9	at Indiana State	D9	at Marquette	WISCONSIN-LEHIGH	
F27	St. John's	J21	at St. Francis (N.Y.)	D12	Tennessee Wesleyan	J7	at Evansville	D10	Missouri-Kansas City	N13	at Holy Cross
		J30	at Monmouth	D28	at College of Charleston	J13	at Southern Illinois	D20	at Northern Illinois	N15	at Notre Dame
		J31	at Monmouth	J2	UT-Chattanooga	J16	at Bradley	D29	at Northern Illinois	N18	Lehigh
		F4	at Central Connecticut State	J4	at East Tennessee State	J18	at Bradley	D2	Detroit	N19	New Hampshire
		F6	Mount St. Mary's	J11	at UNC Greensboro	J23	at Southern Illinois	J4	Cleveland State	D4	at Army
		F16	at Quinnipiac	J11	at UNC Greensboro	J23	at Southern Illinois	J7	at Wisconsin-Green Bay	D9	at Vermont
		F20	Fairleigh Dickinson	J16	at UNC Greensboro	J31	at Southwest Missouri State	J14	at Illinois-Chicago	D27-28	Cowboy Shootout
				J18	at Appalachian State	F4	Evansville	J16	at Loyola of Chicago	J28	at Princeton
				J23	at VMI	F6	Crestlight	J21	Wright State	J9	at Brown
				J28	at VMI	F11	at Drake	J28	Butler	J16	at Broun
				J35	Georgia Southern	F13	at Northern Iowa	J28	at Detroit	J19	at Swarthmore
				J38	East Tennessee State	F18	Indiana State	F30	at Cleveland State	J25	at Brown
				D1	at Davidson	F20	at Bradley	J3	at Western Illinois	J28	Denver
				F6	at Furman	F22	at Creighton	F6	Wisconsin-Green Bay	J30	at Hartford
				F13	Wofford	N14	at Virginia Tech	F18	Loyola of Chicago	J31	at Dartmouth
				F15	at The Citadel	N17	Furman	F20	at Wright State	F5	at Cornell
				F20	Appalachian State	N18	at Virginia Tech	WOFFORD		F6	Columbia
				F20	UNC Greensboro	N17	at Virginia Tech	N16	at Brigham Young	F12	at Princeton
						N18	at Wake Forest	N13	at Air Force	F13	Pennsylvania
						N28	at Hampton	N19	at Air Force	F19	at Columbia
						N30	at UNC Greensboro	N23	at South Carolina	F20	at Cornell
						D2	at The Citadel	N29	Toccoa Falls	F26	Dartmouth
						D21-22	Standard Invitational	D30	at Army	F27	at Harvard
						D28	UNC Greensboro	D5	Navy	YOUNGSTOWN STATE	
						D19	at George Mason	D16	at George Tech	N18	at Kent
						D29-30	Oakland University	J2	at Furman	N20	Slippery Rock
						J13	at American	J4	at UNC Greensboro	N24	at Hofstra
						J2	at The Citadel	J9	UT-Chattanooga	N28	at Loyola of Chicago
						J16	at East Carolina	J11	at Appalachian State	N29	at Southern Utah
						J23	at James Madison City	J30	at College of Charleston	D11-12	KOVO/Coca-Cola Classic
						J25	at Virginia Commonwealth	J18	at VMI	D16	at Fairleigh Dickinson
						J27	at American	J20	at North Carolina State	D23	at Montana
						J30	at East Carolina	J25	at Georgia Southern	D2	IUPUI
						F3	at UNC Wilmington	J25	College of Charleston	J4	Oakland University
						F6	Virginia Commonwealth	F1	The Citadel	J7	at Western Illinois
						F13	at Old Dominion	F30	at UT-Chattanooga	J4	at Valparaiso
						F17	James Madison	F4	at East Tennessee State	J14	Missouri-Kansas City
						F20	at Richmond	F8	at Georgia Southern	J16	at Oral Roberts
								F8	at Western Carolina	J23	at Western Illinois
								F13	Furman	J23	at Oakland University
								F16	Davidson	J27	at Central State
								F20	at The Citadel	J30	at IUPUI
										F4	Chicago State
										F6	Southern Utah
										F11	at Chicago State
										F13	at Valparaiso
										F18	at Oral Roberts
										F20	at Missouri-Kansas City

1998-99 IN-SEASON TOURNAMENTS

- **November 10-11** Coaches vs. Cancer Ikon Classic (New York) Georgetown vs. Temple, Illinois vs. Wake Forest.
- **November 16-27 Chase NIT** (First- and second-round games to be played at campus sites; semifinals and finals to be played in New York) College of Charleston at Georgia, Florida International at North Carolina, Gonzaga at Memphis, Illinois-Chicago at Purdue, Niagara at Massachusetts, UNC Asheville at St. John's, SMU at Stanford, SW Missouri State at Missouri.
- **November 19-20** Zippy's Invitational (Honolulu) Hawaii* vs. Nicholls State, Marquette vs. Oklahoma State.
- **November 19-21** Battle of Baltimore Classic (Towson, Md.) Towson State* vs. Morgan State, Loyola (Md.) vs. Md.-Baltimore Co.
- **November 19-22** Top of the World Classic (Fairbanks, Alaska) Alaska-Fairbanks* vs. Washington State, Arkansas vs. Virginia, Nebraska vs. Villanova, New Mexico State vs. Wisconsin.
- **November 20-21** Fairfield Tournament (Fairfield, Conn.) Fairfield* vs. Portland, George Mason vs. Long Island.
- **November 20-21** Mohegan Sun Tournament (New Britain, Conn.) Central Connecticut State* vs. Brown, Delaware State vs. New Hampshire.
- **November 23-25** Maui Invitational (Maui, Hawaii) Chaminade* vs. Syracuse, Arizona State vs. Utah, Clemson vs. Michigan, Indiana vs. Kansas State.
- **November 23-28** Great Alaska Shootout (Anchorage, Alaska) Alaska-Anchorage* vs. Fresno State, Cincinnati vs. Southern Utah, Duke vs. Notre Dame, Iowa State vs. St. Mary's.
- **November 26-29** Puerto Rico Shootout (San Juan, PR) American U.-Puerto Rico* vs. Maryland, Colorado vs. Kentucky, Pittsburgh vs. San Francisco, UCLA vs. Xavier.
- **November 27-28** Coca-Cola Spartan Classic (East Lansing, Mich.) Michigan State*, Central Florida, UNC Wilmington, Western Michigan.
- **November 27-28** Lobo Classic (Albuquerque, N.M.) New Mexico* vs. Cornell, La Salle vs. Northeastern.
- **November 27-28** Pepsi-Marist Classic (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.) Marist* vs. Colgate, Columbia vs. Vermont.
- **November 27-28** Sooner Holiday Classic (Norman, Okla.) Oklahoma* vs. Western Carolina, Arkansas-Little Rock vs. Murray State.
- **November 27-29** Big Island Invitational (Hilo, Hawaii) Hawaii-Hilo* vs. Washington, Evansville vs. St. Louis, Georgia Tech vs. New Orleans, West Virginia vs. Wisconsin-Green Bay.
- **November 27-29** Honolulu Shootout (Honolulu) Baylor, Delaware State, Illinois State, Virginia Commonwealth.
- **November 27-29** United Airlines Tip-Off Tournament (Honolulu) Hawaii* vs. Wichita State, Auburn vs. Rutgers.
- **November 28-29** FIU/Money Store Tournament (Miami) Florida International* vs. Bucknell, Georgia Southern vs. Northern Illinois.
- **December 3-4** Phoenix Classic (Hartford, Conn.) Hartford* vs. Yale, Central Connecticut State vs. Fordham.
- **December 3-4** Power Bar Invitational (Honolulu) Hawaii*, Cal State Northridge, Coppin State, Georgia State.
- **December 4-5** Ameritas Classic (Lincoln, Neb.) Nebraska* vs. SW Texas State, Colgate vs. Davidson.
- **December 4-5** Cardinal Varsity Club Classic (Muncie, Ind.) Ball State* vs. St. Joseph's (Ind.), Jacksonville vs. South Carolina State.
- **December 4-5** Carrier Classic (Syracuse, N.Y.) Syracuse* vs. Ohio University, Illinois-Chicago vs. Santa Clara.
- **December 4-5** Cyclone Challenge (Ames, Iowa) Iowa State* vs. North Texas, Princeton vs. Western Illinois.
- **December 4-5** First Bank Classic (Milwaukee) Marquette*, Cornell, Tulsa, Vermont.
- **December 4-5** Northwestern Mutual Classic (San Francisco) San Francisco* vs. Holy Cross, Rice vs. Weber State.
- **December 4-5** Pizza Hut Classic (Springfield, Mo.) SW Missouri State* vs. Texas-Pan American, Louisiana Tech vs. Texas Southern.
- **December 4-5** Super Chevy Shootout (Iowa City, Iowa) Iowa* vs. Detroit, Gonzaga vs. South Alabama.
- **December 6-7** BB+T Classic (Washington, D.C.) George Washington* vs. DePaul, Maryland vs. Stanford.
- **December 11-12** Boilermaker Invitational (West Lafayette, Ind.) Purdue* vs. Valparaiso, Eastern Washington vs. La Salle.
- **December 11-12** Cougar Classic (Provo, Utah) BYU* vs. Louisiana Tech, Cal State Northridge vs. Southern Utah.
- **December 11-12** Indiana Classic (Bloomington, Ind.) Indiana* vs. Boise State, Bowling Green vs. Grambling.
- **December 11-12** KGVO/Coca-Cola Classic (Butte, Mont.) Montana*, Idaho, St. Mary's, Youngstown State.
- **December 18-19** Nike Festival (Honolulu) Hawaii* vs. Eastern Illinois, Northern Arizona vs. St. Bonaventure.
- **December 18-19** TCBY Holiday Classic (Little Rock, Ark.) Arkansas-Little Rock* vs. High Point, Centenary vs. Richmond.
- **December 19-20** UNO Christmas Classic (New Orleans) New Orleans* vs. Maine, Tennessee State vs. Troy State.
- **December 21-22** College of Charleston Classic (Charleston, S.C.) College of Charleston* vs. SUNY-Stony Brook, Charleston Southern vs. Delaware.
- **December 21-22** Golden Bear Classic (Oakland) California* vs. Eastern Kentucky, Mississippi State vs. SW Louisiana.
- **December 21-22** Stanford Invitational (Palo Alto, Calif.) Stanford* vs. Elon, Santa Clara vs. William & Mary.
- **December 21-23** Pearl Harbor Classic (Laie, Hawaii) BYU-Hawaii* vs. Oregon State, Alabama vs. Weber State, Michigan State vs. Pepperdine, Texas Tech vs. Tulsa.
- **December 21-23** Puerto Rico Holiday Shootout (San Juan) American U.-Puerto Rico* vs. Oklahoma, Middle Tennessee State vs. NC State, Mississippi vs. St. Joseph's, Ohio State vs. UAB.
- **December 22-23** Coors Light Classic (Fresno, Calif.) Fresno State* vs. Chicago State, Miami of Ohio vs. San Diego.
- **December 22-23** Iowa State Holiday Classic (Ames, Iowa) Iowa State* vs. New Orleans, Rice vs. St. Mary's.
- **December 26-27** ECAC Holiday Festival (New York City) Iona vs. Penn, Georgia Tech vs. Hofstra.
- **December 27-28** Cowboy Shootout (Laramie, Wyo.) Wyoming* vs. Louisiana Tech, Wagner vs. Yale.
- **December 27-28** Union Federal Hoosier Classic (Indianapolis) Indiana* vs. Drake, Ball State vs. Bucknell.
- **December 27-30** Outrigger Hotels Rainbow Classic (Honolulu) Hawaii* vs. SW Louisiana, Florida State vs. Princeton, Mississippi State vs. Texas, Murray State vs. UNC Charlotte.
- **December 28-29** Bobcat Holiday Classic (Bozeman, Mont.) Montana State* vs. Canisius, Boston University vs. Colorado.
- **December 28-29** Arizona State Christmas Classic (Tempe, Ariz.) Arizona State* vs. Navy, Alaska-Anchorage vs. SMU.
- **December 28-29** Gossner Foods Classic (Logan, Utah) Utah State* vs. Norfolk State, Lafayette vs. Troy State.
- **December 28-29** Jones Intercable Lobo Invitational (Albuquerque) New Mexico* vs. New Hampshire, Houston vs. Portland State.
- **December 28-29** Sierra Providence Sun Classic (El Paso, Texas) UTEP* vs. Washington State, Detroit vs. Grambling.
- **December 28-30** Bank One Fiesta Bowl Classic (Tucson, Ariz.) Arizona* vs. Holy Cross, Florida International vs. Penn State.
- **December 29-30** All-College Tournament (Oklahoma City) Oklahoma* vs. Western Kentucky, Cal Poly SLO vs. Oral Roberts.
- **December 29-30** Cable Car Classic (Santa Clara, Calif.) Santa Clara* vs. Harvard, St. Joseph's vs. San Francisco.
- **December 29-30** Capital City Classic (Tallahassee, Fla.) Florida A&M* vs. Jacksonville, Niagara vs. Radford.
- **December 29-30** Cessna Classic (Wichita, Kan.) Wichita State*, Mercer, Mississippi Valley State, Western Illinois.
- **December 29-30** Dr Pepper Classic (Chattanooga, Tenn.) UT Chattanooga* vs. Rider, Hampton vs. Samford.
- **December 29-30** Pepsi-Oneida Bingo and Casino Classic (Green Bay, Wis.) Wisconsin-Green Bay*, Air Force, Drexel, Texas Southern.
- **December 29-30** Sparklets Invitational Tournament (Malibu, Calif.) Pepperdine*, Eastern Michigan, Rhode Island, Siena.

*—Host school.

1998 NCAA TOURNAMENT RESULTS

First Round

North Carolina 88, Navy 52
UNC Charlotte 77, Illinois-Chicago 62
Princeton 69, UNLV 57
Michigan State 83, Eastern Michigan 71
Washington 69, Temple 68
Richmond 62, South Carolina 61
Indiana 94, Oklahoma 87
Connecticut 93, Fairleigh Dickinson 85
Syracuse 63, Iona 61
New Mexico 79, Butler 62
Oklahoma State 74, George Washington 59
Duke 99, Radford 63
Kentucky 82, South Carolina State 67
Saint Louis 51, Massachusetts 46
Michigan 80, Davidson 61
UCLA 65, Miami (Fla.) 62
Valparaiso 70, Mississippi 69
Florida State 96, TCU 87
Rhode Island 97, Murray State 74
Kansas 110, Prairie View 52
Western Michigan 75, Clemson 72
Stanford 67, College of Charleston 57
Purdue 95, Delaware 56
Detroit 66, St. John's 64
Maryland 82, Utah State 68
Illinois 64, South Alabama 51
Illinois State 82, Tennessee 81 (OT)
Arizona 99, Nicholls State 60
West Virginia 82, Temple 52
Cincinnati 65, Northern Arizona 62
Utah 85, San Francisco 68
Arkansas 74, Nebraska 65

Second Round

North Carolina 93, UNC Charlotte 83 (OT)
Michigan State 63, Princeton 56
Washington 81, Richmond 66
Connecticut 78, Indiana 68
Duke 79, Oklahoma State 73
Syracuse 56, New Mexico 46
Kentucky 88, Saint Louis 61
UCLA 85, Michigan 82
Valparaiso 83, Florida State 77 (OT)
Rhode Island 80, Kansas 75
Stanford 83, Western Michigan 65
Purdue 80, Detroit 65
Maryland 67, Illinois 61
Arizona 82, Illinois State 49
West Virginia 75, Cincinnati 74
Utah 75, Arkansas 69

Regional Semifinals

North Carolina 73, Michigan State 58
Connecticut 75, Washington 74
Duke 80, Syracuse 67
Kentucky 94, UCLA 68
Rhode Island 74, Valparaiso 68
Stanford 67, Purdue 59
Arizona 87, Maryland 79
Utah 65, West Virginia 62

Regional Finals

North Carolina 75, Connecticut 64
Kentucky 86, Duke 84
Stanford 79, Rhode Island 77
Utah 76, Arizona 51

Final Four/Semifinals

Utah 65, North Carolina 59
Kentucky 86, Stanford 85 (OT)

Championship

Kentucky 78, Utah 69

1998 NCAA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT RESULTS

First Round

Arizona 75, Santa Clara 63
Connecticut 93, Fairfield 52
Youngstown State 91, Memphis 80
Nebraska 76, New Mexico 59
Florida International 59, Marquette 45
Kansas 72, Tulane 68
Notre Dame 78, SW Missouri State 64
UCLA 65, Michigan 58
George Washington 74, Georgia 72
North Carolina State 89, Maine 64
Old Dominion 92, St. Francis (Pa.) 39
North Carolina 91, Howard 71
Alabama 94, UNC-Greensboro 46
Iowa 77, Massachusetts 59
Texas Tech 87, Grambling 75
Virginia 77, SMU 68
Harvard 71, Stanford 67
Rutgers 79, Oregon 76
Louisville 69, Utah 61
Western Kentucky 88, Stephen F. Austin 76
Virginia Tech 75, Wisconsin 64
Colorado State 81, Drake 75
Iowa State 79, Kent 76
Clemson 60, Miami (Fla.) 49
UC Santa Barbara 76, Vanderbilt 71 (OT)
Duke 92, Middle Tennessee State 67
Florida 85, Montana 64
Tennessee 102, Liberty 58
Purdue 88, Washington 71
Arkansas 76, Hawaii 70
Illinois 82, Wis.-Green Bay 58
Louisiana Tech 86, Holy Cross 58

Second Round

North Carolina 85, Florida International 72
NC State 88, Youngstown State 61
Old Dominion 75, Nebraska 60
Kansas 62, Iowa 58
Notre Dame 74, Texas Tech 59
Alabama 75, UCLA 74
Connecticut 75, George Washington 67
Arizona 94, Virginia 77
Arkansas 82, Harvard 64
Rutgers 62, Iowa State 61
Duke 69, Louisville 53
Florida 89, Virginia Tech 57
Purdue 77, Colorado State 63
Louisiana Tech 74, Clemson 52
Illinois 69, UC Santa Barbara 65
Tennessee 82, Western Kentucky 62

Regional Semifinals

NC State 55, Old Dominion 54
Louisiana Tech 71, Alabama 57
Arkansas 79, Kansas 63
Connecticut 74, Arizona 57
Purdue 70, Notre Dame 65
Tennessee 92, Rutgers 60
Duke 71, Florida 58
North Carolina 80, Illinois 74

Regional Finals

Arkansas 77, Duke 72
NC State 60, Connecticut 52
Louisiana Tech 72, Purdue 65
Tennessee 76, North Carolina 70

Final Four/Semifinals

Louisiana Tech 84, NC State 65
Tennessee 86, Arkansas 58

Championship

Tennessee 93, Louisiana Tech 75

1999 NCAA TOURNAMENT

FIRST AND SECOND ROUND

East Region

March 12 and 14
Fleet Center, Boston (for ticket info:
617-624-2299).

Charlotte Coliseum, Charlotte
(704-357-4801)

South Region

March 11 and 13

Orlando Arena, Orlando
(407-849-2020)

RCA Dome, Indianapolis
(317-262-3389)

Midwest Region

March 12 and 14

Bradley Center, Milwaukee,
(414-288-7127)

Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans
(504-587-3800)

West Region

March 11 and 13

ey Arena, Seattle (206-543-2200)
McNichols Arena, Denver (sold out)

REGIONALS

East

Continental Airlines Arena, East Ruth-
erford, N.J., March 19 and 21
(201-935-3900)

South

Thompson-Boling Arena, Knoxville,
Tenn., March 18 and 20
(423-656-1200)

Midwest

Trans World Dome, St. Louis, March
19 and 21 (314-436-1551)

West

America West Arena, Phoenix, March
18 and 20 (602-727-2695)

FINAL FOUR

Tropicana Field, St. Petersburg, Fla.
Semifinals, March 27

East vs. Midwest and South vs. West.
First semifinal at about 5:42 p.m. ET.

Final, March 29

Semifinal winners, tipoff at about
8:20 p.m. ET.

DIVISION I WOMEN

First and second rounds at campus sites on March 12 and 14 or March 13 and 15

REGIONALS, March 20 and 22

EAST: Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, N.C.

MIDEAST: Shoemaker Center, Cincinnati.

MIDWEST: Redbird Arena, Normal, Ill.

WEST: L.A. Sports Arena, Los Angeles.

FINAL FOUR, March 26 and 28

San Jose Arena, San Jose.

DIVISION II AND III MEN

First and second rounds at campus sites on March 5 and 7 or March 6 and 8 for Division II, and first, second and third rounds at campus sites on March 5 and 7 and March 13 and 14 for Division III.

Division II finals: Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Ky., March 18, 19 and 21.

Division III finals: Salem Civic Center, Salem, Va.

DIVISION II AND III WOMEN

Early rounds at campus sites.

Division II finals: Pine Bluff Convention Center, Pine Bluff, Ark., March 17, 18 and 20.

Division III finals: March 20 and 21, at campus site to be determined.

FUTURE MEN'S FINAL FOUR SITES

2000: RCA Dome, Indianapolis.

2001: Metrodome, Minneapolis.

2002: Georgia Dome, Atlanta.

2003: Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans.

2004: Alamodome, San Antonio.

2000 MEN'S SITES

East Region, March 17 and 19, 2000

Marine Midland Arena, Buffalo

Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Regional final: Carrier Dome, Syracuse, N.Y., March 24 and 26, 2000

South Region, March 17 and 19, 2000

Nashville Arena, Nashville

Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center, Birmingham, Ala.

Regional final: Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Texas, March 24 and 26, 2000

Midwest Region, March 16 and 18, 2000

Cleveland State University Convocation Center, Cleveland

Metrodome, Minneapolis

Regional final: The Palace Of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich., March 23 and 25, 2000.

West Region, March 16 and 18

Huntsman Center, Salt Lake City

McKale Center, Tucson, Ariz.

Regional final: University Arena, Albuquerque, March 23 and 25, 2000.

CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

League	Dates	Site	League	Dates	Site
America East	Feb. 26-28; March 6	Newark, Del.	Mid-Eastern Athletic	March 3-6	Richmond, Va.
Atlantic Coast	March 4-7	Charlotte, N.C.	Midwestern Collegiate	Feb. 27-28; March 2	Chicago
Atlantic 10	March 3-6	Philadelphia, Pa.	Missouri Valley	Feb. 26-March 1	St. Louis
Big East	March 3-6	New York	Northeast	F25-27; March 1	Staten Island, N.Y.
Big Sky	March 4-6	To be determined*	Ohio Valley	Feb. 24; Feb. 27-28	Nashville
Big South	Feb. 24-27	Asheville, N.C.	Patriot	Feb. 27-28	West Point, N.Y.
Big Ten	March 4-7	Chicago	Southeastern	March 4-7	Atlanta
Big 12	March 4-7	Kansas City, Mo.	Southern	Feb. 25-28	Greensboro, N.C.
Big West	March 5-7	Reno, Nev.	Southland	March 3-6	To be determined*
Colonial Athletic Association	Feb. 25-28	Richmond, Va.	Southwestern Athletic	March 4-6	Dallas
Conference USA	March 3-6	Birmingham, Ala.	Sun Belt	Feb. 27-28; March 2	Lafayette, La.
Metro Atlantic Athletic	Feb. 26-March 1	Buffalo	Trans America Athletic	Feb. 25-27	Jacksonville
Mid-American	Feb. 27; March 2-3	Toledo, Ohio	West Coast	Feb. 27-March 1	Santa Clara, Calif.
Mid-Continent	Feb. 28-March 2	Moline, Ill.	Western Athletic	March 2; March 4-6	Las Vegas

*—At site of highest remaining seed

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COACHING CHANGES

School	Former coach	New coach	New Coach's former job	School	Former coach	New coach	New Coach's former job
Alabama	David Hobbs	Mark Gottfried	Murray State coach	Monmouth	Wayne Szoke	Dave Calloway	Monmouth assistant
Arizona State	Don Newman*	Rob Evans	Mississippi coach	Montana	Blaine Taylor	Don Holst**	Montana assistant
UC Santa Barbara	Jerry Pimm	Bob Williams	UC-Davis coach	Murray State	Mark Gottfried	Tevester Anderson	Murray State assistant
Chicago State	Phil Gary	Bo Ellis	Marquette assistant	Niagara	Jack Armstrong	Joe Mihalich	La Salle assistant
Clemson	Rick Barnes	Larry Shyatt	Wyoming coach	UNC Charlotte	Melvin Watkins	Bobby Lutz	UNC Charlotte assistant
Coastal Carolina	Michael Hopkins	Pete Strickland	Dayton assistant	Norfolk State	Michael Bernard	Mel Coleman**	Norfolk State assistant
Colgate	Paul Aiello*	Emmett Davis	Navy assistant	Northern Iowa	Eldon Miller	Sam Weaver	Iowa State assistant
Colorado State	Stew Morrill	Ritchie McKay	Portland State coach	Portland State	Ritchie McKay	To be announced	
Duquesne	Scott Edgar	Darelle Porter**	Duquesne assistant	Providence	Pete Gillen	Tim Welsh	Iona coach
Fairfield	Paul Cormier	Tim O'Toole	Seton Hall assistant	St. John's	Fran Fraschilla	Mike Jarvis	George Washington coach
George Washington	Mike Jarvis	Tom Penders	Texas coach (fired)	Sam Houston State	Jerry Hopkins	Bob Marlin	Alabama assistant
Houston	Alvin Brooks	Clyde Drexler	Player with NBA's Houston Rockets	San Jose State	Stan Morrison	Phil Johnson	Arizona assistant
Howard	Mike McLeese	Kirk N. Saulny	UNC Wilmington assistant	Southern Illinois	Rich Herrin	Bruce Weber	Purdue assistant
Idaho State	Herb Williams	Doug Oliver	Stanford assistant	Tennessee Tech	Frank Harrell	Jeff Lebo	South Carolina assistant
Iona	Tim Welsh	Jeff Ruland	Iona assistant	Texas	Tom Penders	Rick Barnes	Clemson coach
Iowa State	Tim Floyd	Larry Eustachy	Utah State coach	Texas A&M	Tony Barone	Melvin Watkins	UNC Charlotte coach
Jacksonville State	Bill Jones	Mark Turgeon	NBA Philadelphia 76ers assistant	Utah State	Larry Eustachy	Stew Morrill	Colorado State coach
Liberty	Randy Dunton*	Mel Hankinson	West Virginia assistant	Virginia	Jeff Jones	Pete Gillen	Providence coach
Long Island U.	Ray Haskins	Ray Martin	Miami (Ohio) assistant	Western Kentucky	Matt Kilcullen	Dennis Felton	Clemson assistant
Louisiana Tech	Jim Wooldridge	Keith Richard	Louisiana Tech assistant	Winthrop	Dan Kenney	Gregg Marshall	Marshall assistant
Loyola (Ill.)	Ken Burmeister	Rhodie Farmer	Rhode Island assistant	Wyoming	Larry Shyatt	Steve McClain	TCU assistant
Mississippi	Rob Evans	Rod Barnes	Mississippi assistant				
Mississippi State	Richard Williams	Rick Stansbury	Mississippi State assistant				

*—served as interim coach; **—will serve as interim coach

INDEX OF DIVISION I TEAMS

Air Force93	Davidson120	Kentucky45	Northern Illinois105	Southwestern Louisiana122
Akron104	Dayton58	Lafayette133	Northern Iowa103	Southwest Missouri State100
Alabama51	Delaware116	Lamar130	North Texas114	Southwest Texas State130
Alabama A&M129	Delaware State131	La Salle59	Northwestern66	Stanford29
Alabama State129	DePaul69	Lehigh133	Northwestern State130	Stephen F. Austin130
Alcorn State129	Detroit108	Liberty132	Notre Dame89	Stetson127
Alcorn State113	Drake103	Long Beach State115	Oakland (Mich.)125	Syracuse84
Appalachian State120	Drexel116	Long Island U.126	Ohio State65	Temple53
Arizona30	Duke37	LSU51	Ohio U.104	Tennessee46
Arizona State34	Duquesne59	Louisiana Tech122	Oklahoma77	UT-Chattanooga121
Arkansas49	East Carolina113	Louisville69	Oklahoma State75	UT-Martin119
Arkansas-Little Rock123	Eastern Illinois119	Loyola (Ill.)109	Old Dominion112	Tennessee State118
Arkansas-Pine Bluff129	Eastern Kentucky119	Loyola (Md.)111	Oral Roberts125	Tennessee Tech119
Arkansas State122	Eastern Michigan105	Loyola Marymount107	Oregon34	Texas78
Army133	Eastern Washington124	Maine117	Oregon State35	Texas A&M81
Auburn50	East Tennessee State120	Manhattan111	Pacific115	Texas-Arlington130
Austin Peay118	Elon132	Marist111	Penn State63	TCU91
Ball State105	Evansville102	Marquette70	Pennsylvania128	Texas-El Paso97
Baylor81	Fairfield111	Marshall104	Pepperdine106	Texas-Pan American134
Belmont134	Fairleigh Dickinson126	Maryland38	Pittsburgh85	Texas-San Antonio130
Bethune-Cookman131	Florida48	Maryland-Baltimore County126	Portland107	Texas Southern129
Boise State114	Florida A&M131	Maryland-Eastern Shore131	Portland State124	Texas Tech81
Boston College89	Florida Atlantic127	Massachusetts55	Prairie View129	Toledo105
Boston U.116	Florida International122	McNeese State130	Princeton128	Towson117
Bowling Green105	Florida State42	Memphis71	Providence88	Troy State127
Bradley101	Fordham56	Mercer127	Purdue62	Tulane73
BYU97	Fresno State96	Miami (Fla.)86	Quinnipiac126	Tulsa91
Brown128	Furman121	Miami (Ohio)104	Radford132	UAB72
Bucknell133	George Mason112	Michigan66	Rhode Island54	UCLA28
Buffalo105	Georgetown86	Michigan State61	Rice93	UNLV91
Butler109	George Washington58	Middle Tennessee State118	Richmond113	Utah95
California31	Georgia47	Minnesota63	Rider110	Utah State114
Cal Poly115	Georgia Southern121	Mississippi50	Robert Morris126	Valparaiso125
Cal Santa Barbara115	Georgia State127	Mississippi State50	Rutgers87	Vanderbilt48
Cal State Fullerton115	Georgia Tech42	Mississippi Valley State129	St. Bonaventure55	Vermont117
Cal State Northridge124	Gonzaga106	Missouri79	St. Francis (N.Y.)126	Villanova86
Campbell127	Grambling129	Missouri-Kansas City125	St. Francis (Pa.)126	Virginia43
Canisius111	Hampton131	Monmouth126	St. John's85	Virginia Commonwealth113
Centenary127	Hartford117	Montana124	St. Joseph's56	VMI120
Central Connecticut State126	Harvard128	Montana State124	Saint Louis69	Virginia Tech59
Central Florida127	Hawaii96	Morehead State119	Saint Mary's106	Wagner126
Central Michigan105	High Point132	Morgan State131	St. Peter's111	Wake Forest41
Charleston Southern132	Hofstra116	Mount St. Mary's126	Sacramento State124	Washington32
Chicago State125	Holy Cross133	Murray State118	Samford127	Washington State35
Cincinnati68	Houston73	Navy133	Sam Houston State130	Weber State124
The Citadel121	Howard131	Nebraska79	San Diego107	Western Carolina121
Clemson40	Idaho114	Nevada115	San Diego State98	Western Illinois125
Cleveland State109	Idaho State124	New Hampshire117	San Francisco107	Western Kentucky123
Coastal Carolina132	Illinois65	New Mexico94	San Jose State98	Western Michigan105
Colgate133	Illinois-Chicago108	New Mexico State114	Santa Clara106	West Virginia87
College of Charleston121	Illinois State101	New Orleans123	Seton Hall88	Wichita State101
Colorado80	Indiana63	Niagara110	Siena110	William & Mary113
Colorado State92	Indiana State102	Nicholls State130	South Alabama123	Winthrop132
Columbia128	IUPUI125	Norfolk State131	South Carolina47	Wisconsin64
Connecticut83	Iona110	North Carolina39	South Carolina State131	Wisconsin-Green Bay108
Coppin State131	Iowa64	UNC Asheville132	Southeastern Louisiana130	Wisconsin-Milwaukee109
Cornell128	Iowa State79	UNC Charlotte70	Southeast Missouri State119	Wofford121
Creighton100	Jackson State129	UNC Greensboro120	Southern Illinois102	Wright State109
Dartmouth128	Jacksonville127	UNC Wilmington112	SMU92	Wyoming92
	Jacksonville State127	Northeastern117	Southern Miss72	Xavier57
	James Madison112	Northeast Louisiana130	Southern Utah125	Yale128
	Kansas76	Northern Arizona124	South Florida72	Youngstown State125
	Kansas State80			
	Kent104			

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1. Going into the 1998 season, which Division 1-A conference do you feel is the strongest?
☐ ACC ☐ Pac-10 ☐ Big Ten
☐ SEC ☐ Big East ☐ Big 12
☐ Conference USA ☐ WAC
2. Should college athletes be paid?
☐ Yes ☐ No
3. What is more exciting to you?
☐ March Madness ☐ NBA playoffs
4. Do you think that regular-season results are important enough in the overall scheme of college basketball?
☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Do you approve of the rule that allows college players to declare for the NBA draft and return to school if they aren't picked as high as they'd like?
☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Which is more exciting to you, a three-pointer or a dunk?
☐ three-pointer ☐ dunk
7. Should the three-point line be moved further back? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Do you prefer professional or college basketball? ☐ pro ☐ college
9. If you attended college, do you actively support your school's basketball team by attending games and/or donating money to the athletic department? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Would you like to see more coverage of the NAIA? ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. How often do you refer to The Sporting News College Basketball yearbook throughout the season?
☐ weekly ☐ monthly ☐ constantly
12. Is this your first purchase of The Sporting News College Basketball yearbook? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 12a. If not, how many times have you bought previously? ☐ 1 ☐ 2-3
☐ 4-5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ over 10
13. If we could devote more or less space to certain sections (without changing the overall number of pages), how would you like to see that space used?

More pages	Fewer pages	Perfect as is
_____	_____	_____
		Feature articles on players, issues, etc.
_____	_____	_____
		Conference previews
_____	_____	_____
		Team charts
_____	_____	_____
		Scouting the nation and conferences
_____	_____	_____
		Predictions (conference races, All-America teams, etc.)
_____	_____	_____
		Women's basketball
14. Anything else we should change to improve The Sporting News College Basketball yearbook?

15. How many other people read your copy of The Sporting News College Basketball yearbook? ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
☐ 3 ☐ 4-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15

16. What factors influenced you to buy The Sporting News College Basketball yearbook? (Check all that apply.) ☐ overall editorial content ☐ graphic presentation ☐ cover ☐ price ☐ name recognition

17. Ideally, when would you like to buy the College Basketball yearbook? ☐ Oct. 1 ☐ Oct. 15 ☐ Nov. 1 ☐ Nov. 15

18. Which other yearbooks from The Sporting News do you read or look through? (Check all that apply.) ☐ College Football ☐ Fantasy Football ☐ Pro Football ☐ Racing ☐ Baseball ☐ Fantasy Baseball ☐ College Basketball ☐ Hockey

19. If it were possible to buy all nine of The Sporting News yearbooks on a subscription basis, would you do so? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Do you read yearbooks from other companies? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20a. If yes, which ones? ☐ Athlon ☐ Dick Vitale's ☐ Lindy's ☐ Preview ☐ Street & Smith's ☐ Other _____

21. Do you buy The Sporting News weekly magazine? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21a. If yes, are you a subscriber? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21b. How would you rate the college basketball coverage? ☐ excellent ☐ very good ☐ good ☐ average ☐ below average

22. Have you ever purchased something through the mail? ☐ Yes ☐ No

23. Do you play sports? ☐ Yes ☐ No

23a. If yes, what sports do you play? ☐ football ☐ golf ☐ baseball ☐ tennis ☐ softball ☐ running ☐ basketball ☐ cycling ☐ hockey ☐ hiking/walking ☐ soccer ☐ rollerblading ☐ other (s) _____

24. Do you own a personal computer? ☐ Yes ☐ No

25. Do you currently subscribe to an on-line service? ☐ Yes ☐ No

25a. Have you ever seen or used the award-winning TSN website www.sportingnews.com? ☐ Yes ☐ No

26. Do you play in a Rotisserie or other fantasy league? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ baseball ☐ football ☐ basketball ☐ hockey ☐ golf

27. Do you collect trading cards? ☐ Yes ☐ No

27a. If yes, which sports? ☐ baseball ☐ football ☐ basketball ☐ hockey ☐ other _____

27b. Where do you purchase them? ☐ memorabilia store ☐ convenience store ☐ supermarket ☐ mass merchandiser (K-Mart, Bradlees, etc.) ☐ other _____

28. Do you wear merchandise featuring your teams' logos? ☐ Yes ☐ No

29. How much do you spend a year on sporting goods (clothes and equipment)? ☐ under \$100 ☐ \$100 to \$250 ☐ over \$250

30. Will you be buying a new car or truck in the next two years? ☐ Yes ☐ No

31. Do you consider brand names in your purchasing decisions? ☐ Yes ☐ No

32. Have you ever watched any sporting event on pay-per-view? ☐ Yes ☐ No

32a. Do you have a satellite dish? ☐ Yes ☐ No

32b. If yes, do you purchase any of the various sports packages? ☐ Yes ☐ No

33. How many college basketball games do you attend in a season? ☐ 0 ☐ 1-2 ☐ 3-10 ☐ over 10

34. How far away do you live from the home court of the nearest Division I college basketball team? ☐ 0-25 miles ☐ 26-50 ☐ more than 50

35. Have you ever traveled to attend a college game outside your local market? ☐ Yes ☐ No

36. Please check the category that includes your age. ☐ Under 18 ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ Over 64

37. Are you... ☐ male? ☐ female?

38. Are you... ☐ married? ☐ single?

39. Did you attend or graduate from college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

40. Which of the following categories contains your approximate total household income, before taxes, for 1997? (Please include total earnings for all members of your household from all sources.) ☐ Under \$20,000 ☐ \$20,000-\$29,999 ☐ \$30,000-\$39,999 ☐ \$40,000-\$49,999 ☐ \$50,000-\$74,999 ☐ \$75,000-\$99,999 ☐ \$100,000-\$199,999 ☐ Over \$200,000

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